William Maurice McNabb
EX LIBRIS

CHIRON. *For beauty in herself is blessed;*
Grace makes resistless where possessed,
Like Helena, whom once I bore.
FAUST. *Her hast thou borne?*
CHIRON. *Yea! on this back.*

WALPURGIS NIGHT IN FAUST, PART II.,—GOETHE.

THE CARRYING AWAY OF HELEN

After an original painting by G. Melingue.

German Drama

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ALFRED BATES

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

JAMES P. BOYD, A.M., L.B.

LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

PROF. JOHN P. LAMBERTON

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

VOLUME XI

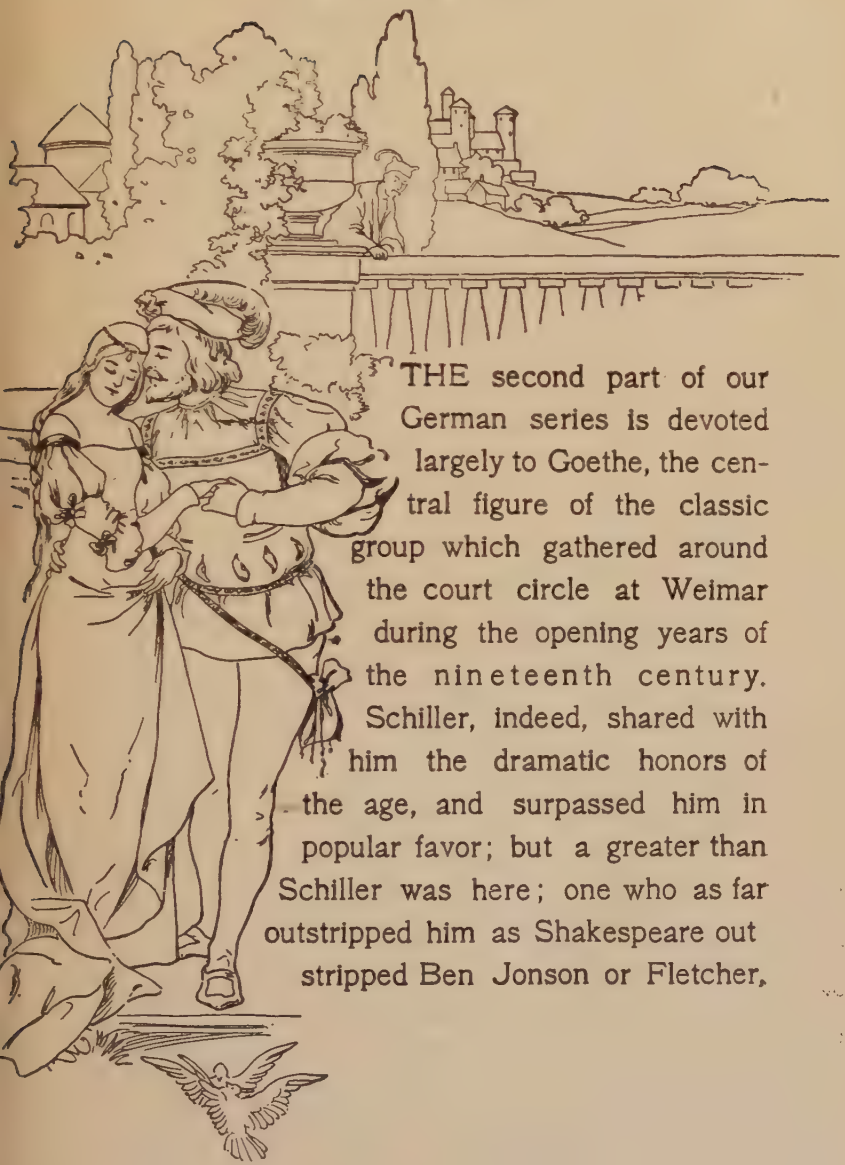
London—New York

Publishers: Smart and Stanley

Copyright, 1903, by ALFRED BATES.

Entered at Stationers' Hall,
London, England.

Prologue



THE second part of our German series is devoted largely to Goethe, the central figure of the classic group which gathered around the court circle at Weimar during the opening years of the nineteenth century. Schiller, indeed, shared with him the dramatic honors of the age, and surpassed him in popular favor; but a greater than Schiller was here; one who as far outstripped him as Shakespeare out stripped Ben Jonson or Fletcher,

as Milton surpassed Dryden and Pope, as Tennyson surpassed all other poets of the Victorian age. Nevertheless, Goethe and Schiller have ever been regarded as the Castor and Pollux in the literary firmament of Germany; they have ever been inseparable in the hearts of their countrymen, though the former is held in greater admiration, while the latter holds a higher place in the affections of the Fatherland.

To the dramas of Goethe, and especially to his *Faust*, both parts of which are passed in review, much of our space is allotted; for here is a work that stands alone in the history of the world's drama, in the history of the world's literature. Not only was it his masterpiece, but it was the task of a lifetime, begun when he was less than a score of years old, and not completed until he was nearing fourscore. Though written in fragments, and published originally as a fragment, it forms one complete and entire composition, and he who would understand it, together with the lessons it is intended to convey, must read it through from beginning to end.

Goethe was the apostle of self-culture, teaching as its first principle, both by precept and example,

the development of the soul, for which purpose the great lesson of life is to renounce. By many he has been accused of coldness and lack of sympathy; but nothing can be further from the truth, for his nature responded to every touch of passing emotion, as a delicate harp responds to the wooing of the wind.

The chapters on Goethe are followed by one on the Romantic school, with the Schlegel brothers, August and Friedrich, at their head, as the centre of the brilliant circle which included Fichte, Fieck, Schelling and Wilhelm von Humboldt. To the poets and romance writers of this school due space is given—to Novalis, its so-called prophet; to Brentano, Von Arnim, Hoffmann and Fouque, Von Kleist and others; for Germany was the home of Romanticism, and this movement, whose influence has since been felt throughout Europe, cannot be lightly passed over. "From the first," says Robertson, in his History of German Literature, "the school was the centre of a group of brilliant men and hardly less brilliant women, who were drawn together by a determination to have done with utilitarianism—men and women inspired by a common idealism, by a craving for a spiritual, more

unworldly poetry and art, and for a form of artistic expression that was in harmony with life."

At the end of the volume are given four plays, carefully selected and translated from the German drama. First is the *Conscience* of August Wilhelm Iffland, a powerful tragedy by one of the most successful of German dramatists. Next is Goethe's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, perhaps the most beautiful of all his dramas. Then comes the *Obstinacy* of R. Benedix, a light piece, and one that brings forth in strong relief the genius of its author. The volume ends with the *Egotist and Pseudo-Critic* of August von Kotzebue, one of the most lively comedies of this still popular writer, whose plays, which once held the Berlin stage almost to the exclusion of all others, have, after a period of oblivion, been recently revived.

Contents.

PAGE

SECTION I.—Goethe, Birth and Education 1

Götz von Berlichingen, Conception of 3

The *Faust* Legend, Elements of 5

Faust, The Poem of 7

Faust, Prelude to 8

"Prologue in Heaven" 10

Faust, First Scene of 12

Faust, Second Scene of 16

Faust, The Compact 17

Margaret, Character of, in *Faust* 19

Walpurgis-Night in *Faust* 20

Faust, Second Part 25

The Carnival, Description of 27

Helen, Character of, in *Faust* 29

The Helena, Scene of 31

Qualities of *Faust* 39

Faust, Analysis of 41

Faust, Meaning of the Poem 49

SECTION II.—Significance of Goethe's Life and Works . 51

Iphigenia in Tauris, Complete Translation . . . 219

Origin of the *Faust* Legend 53

Different Versions of *Faust*. 55

Sorrows of Werther, History of 56

PAGE

Goethe's Life at Weimar 58
Goethe's Journey to Italy 62
Iphigenie, Analysis of 63
Torquato Tasso, Revival of 64
Goethe's Love Affairs 66
Goethe as Theatre Director 69
Goethe's Intercourse with Schiller 71
Celebrity of Goethe 74
Schiller, Death of 74
Goethe's Marriage 75
Hermann and Dorothea, Production of 76
Goethe's Interview with Napoleon 77
Evolution of *Faust* 78
The Elective Affinities, Goethe 80
Goethe's Autobiography 81
The Divan, Character of 83
Goethe's Last Years 85
Faust, Second Part, Controversies Over 86
Goethe's Appearance 89
Goethe's Death 89
Goethe's Qualities 90
Goethe and Shakspeare 92
Censure and Adulation of Goethe 96
Characteristics of Goethe 98
Conscience, by Iffland, Complete Translation . . . 149

SECTION III.—The Romantic School 101
Schlegel the Elder, Life and Works 104
Schlegel the Younger, Dramas of 109
Friedrich von Hardenberg-Novalis 111
Novalis, Character and Works 111
Clemens Brentano, Dramas of 118
Arnim, Dramatic Works of 119
Obstinacy, by Benedix, Complete Translation . . 281

PAGE

SECTION IV.—Hoffmann and Fouqué 121
Hoffmann's Fame 123
Hoffmann's Boyhood and Education 124
Hoffmann's Life in Poland 125
Dark Days for Hoffmann 129
Hoffmann's Fantasy Pieces 131
Hoffmann's Prosperity 133
Hoffmann's Dissipation 135
Hoffmann's Friends and Final Sickness . . . 137, 139
Fouqué, Birth and Literary Success 140, 142
Fouqué, Military Service of 143
Fouqué, The Man and His Works 145
Egotist and Pseudo-Critic, by Kotzebue, Complete Translation 303–36

Illustrations.

FACING PAGE

THE CARRYING AWAY OF HELEN.....*Frontispiece*
After an original painting by G. Melingue

PROGRESS OF GERMAN DRAMA.....*Prologue*
After an original design by C. Beck

FRANZ TAKING LEAVE 29
After an original painting by P. Gervais

IPHIGENIA 63
After an original painting by E. Charlemont

UNDINE AND NEREID 146
After an original painting by W. Kray

German Drama.

PART II.

I

Goethe.

In considering the central figure of the classic age of German literature—the god, he might be called, who sits alone on the summit of the German Parnassus—it is impossible to give more than the merest outline of a life which was so broad and long, of an activity unbroken for more than sixty years, and covering in its range nearly every department of literature, art and science. If a cabinet-picture will suffice for Klopstock and Wieland, a life-size sketch for Lessing and Schiller, we need a canvas of heroic proportions when we attempt to portray Goethe.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe was born at Frankfort-on-the-Main on the 28th of August, 1749. His father was a councillor and a man of wealth, education and high social position; his mother was the daughter of the Imperial councillor, Textor. His mother invented stories for his early boyhood; he learned French from an officer

quartered in his father's house; the best of teachers were provided for him, and when only eight years old he was able to write, though not very correctly, in the German, French, Italian, Greek and Latin languages. His beauty, his precocious talent, his bright, sparkling, lovable nature, procured him an indulgent freedom rarely granted to children, and gave him at the start that independence and self-reliance which he preserved through life.

Young Goethe began to compose even before he began to write; for expression, in his case, was co-existent with feeling and thought. Before he was twelve years old he planned and partly wrote a romance which illustrates his wonderful acquirements. The characters are seven brothers and sisters, scattered in different parts of Europe. One of them writes in German, another in English, a third in French, a fourth in Italian, a fifth in Latin, a sixth in Greek, and a seventh in the Jewish-German dialect. At an age when most boys are struggling unwillingly with the rudiments of knowledge, Goethe had laid a broad basis for all future studies, and grasped with passionate eagerness every opportunity of anticipating them. There have been similar instances of precocity, but the informing and mastering genius was lacking. The boy assimilated and turned to immediate use all that he learned, and his creative power was developed many years in advance of the usual period. He soon became a hero in the youthful society of Frankfort—a poet, an improvisatore and a wit, astonishing his associates by his brilliancy and daring, and at the same time offending his severely respectable father.

At the age of sixteen he was sent to the university of Leipsic to study jurisprudence; but he soon wearied of it, as well as of logic and rhetoric, as they were then taught. Except botany and mineralogy, he neglected all graver studies, gave much of his time to society, and imagined himself in love with a maiden two or three years older than himself. His life at Leipsic, it must be confessed, was very wild and irregular. The scornful independence of others, which he asserted, began to show itself in excesses, and at the end of three years he went home with hemorrhage of the lungs and a tumor on the neck. More than a year was needed for his entire recovery, and during this period his better nature began to assert itself. He regained his lost balance; his literary aspirations revived, and gradually grew into earnestness and coherence.

Götz von Berlichingen.

In his twenty-first year Goethe was sent to Strasburg to continue his legal studies, but already carrying with him the plan of his first famous work—the tragedy of *Götz von Berlichingen*. During the seclusion of his illness he had occupied himself chiefly with alchemy and mystic speculation; but the seed of the future *Faust* was even then sown, and it was not long before it began to germinate. At Strasburg he made the acquaintance of Herder, who was five years older than himself, and at that time of a graver and profounder temperament. The two men were very much unlike, and they never became very intimate friends; but there is no doubt that

Herder's companionship and counsel were of great value in relieving Goethe from the lawless, impulsive spirit which possessed him. As one result, he was suddenly seized with a desire to overcome everything which seemed like a weakness in his nature. He cured his tendency to giddiness on looking down from heights, by climbing the spire of Strasburg cathedral every day. He had a constitutional dread of the supernatural without believing it, so he walked through graveyards at midnight; he disliked loud noises, and therefore went as near as possible to the drums of the military band. He was easily affected by a sense of disgust, and for that reason attended the dissections of the medical class. He also studied electricity, wrote a pamphlet on Gothic architecture, and withal qualified himself for the degree of doctor of law, which he received in little more than a year.

Returning to Frankfort, he first rewrote the tragedy of *Götz von Berlichingen*, and was then sent by his father to practice at Wetzlar, a small town near Giessen. But he remained there only a few months, occupying himself much more with literature than with law. His tragedy was again revised, and was published in the spring of 1773. Its popularity was immediate and universal. Comparing it with Schiller's *Robbers*, produced at very nearly the same age, every reader will feel the great superiority of *Götz*. Here there is nothing crude, and little that is purely subjective; the piece is full of life and movement, and the touch of a master is seen in the delineation of every character. In regard to form Goethe undoubtedly owed something both to Shake-

speare and Lessing, but his management of the historic material is entirely his own. His literary fame was at once secured, and his confidence firmly established, though of this Goethe always possessed a liberal share. It is worthy of remark that a translation of *Götz von Berlichingen* was Walter Scott's first essay in literature.

The attention of such men as Zimmermann, Lavater and Klopstock was attracted toward Goethe by this work. His name began to be known throughout Germany; he was astonished at his sudden popularity, and considered it at first a lucky accident. Soon after the publication of *Götz*, the young prince Karl August of Weimar, passing through Frankfort, sent for the author, and this was the beginning of a friendship which lasted for fifty-five years, and determined the external circumstances of Goethe's life. Law was now entirely given up, and again an inmate of his father's house he gave all his time to literature. He planned a tragedy to be called *Mohammed*, only a fragment of which survives; some twenty-nine dramas or poems on this subject being published in Germany by other authors. There must have been something in the intellectual atmosphere of the day, some general craving for superhuman power, some dissatisfaction with the conditions of life, which made the story attractive.

The Faust Legend.

Goethe took the *Faust* legend like so many others; but he alone saw the typical, universal element hidden in it; he alone was able to engraft his own life and the

governing forces of all human life upon this wild offspring of a darker age. He began to write in 1773, after the subject had been maturing for two or three years in his brain, and by 1775 had written nearly half of the first part. It was composed very slowly, every line and couplet being carefully finished in his mind before being put upon paper. With his removal to Weimar the work ceased, and the manuscript was yellow with age when he took it with him to Italy. Two scenes were added in Rome, and in the edition of his works, published in 1790, first appears *Faust ein Fragment*, containing not quite two-thirds of the first part. Stimulated and encouraged by Schiller, he resumed the work in 1799 and completed the whole of the first part and a considerable portion of the second, which belonged to his plan from the start. In 1808 the first part, as we now possess it, was published; but the second part, delayed by his scientific and Oriental studies, was suffered to wait until 1824, by which time Goethe was seventy-five years old. The third act, generally called *Die Helena*, was published as a fragment in 1827, and the interest and curiosity which it excited encouraged Goethe, in spite of his age, to work out the whole of his grand design. In August, 1831, the second part was finished, but it was not given to the world until after his death.

There is no doubt that the loss of Schiller, the troubles that followed the battle of Jena, and the political convulsions which disturbed Germany for ten years thereafter, prevented Goethe from undertaking the second part while its plan was fresh and his faculties were in their prime. We cannot but feel that much was lost by

the delay; yet, on the other hand, we must admit that no other test could have so clearly proved the vigor and vitality of his genius. Three predominant elements are united in the work, and, while they are generally blended together in harmony, we are sometimes obliged to consider them separately. First, there is that broad, all-comprehensive presentation of the life of man which, at some point or other, touches the experiences of all men, including the problems of good and evil, simply stated and simply solved. Secondly, there is a reflection throughout of Goethe's own life, of the phases of passion and thought through which he passed, of his own faith and doubt, his position in and toward the world. Lastly, there is, especially in the second part, matter introduced which has no direct connection with the plan of the work, and interferes with its natural evolution. In reading we can easily separate this last feature from the main design wherever we detect it; but we must endeavor not to lose sight of the constant and intimate presence of the two former elements—of Goethe's nature and human nature. Notwithstanding the breadth, ripeness and impartial quality of Goethe's mind, we catch a fleeting glimpse, here and there, of his individual presence; or, it may be, that because all his life is so clearly known to us, we see the experience lying far behind the poetry, as we cannot see it in Shakespeare.

Dedication.

Instead of giving the argument of *Faust* in advance, it will be better to commence at once with an examina-

tion of the poem and unfold it as we proceed. The dedication, written when Goethe was nearly fifty years old, breathes a subdued and tender spirit. In resuming his work, so long after its first inception, he recalls his friends and literary associates, nearly all of whom had passed from earth. It is a sweet and solemn prelude that he sings:

They hear no longer these succeeding measures,
The souls to whom my earliest songs I sang:
Dispersed the friendly troop, with all its pleasures,
And still, alas! the echoes first that rang.
I bring the unknown multitude my treasures;
Their very plaudits give my heart a pang,
And those, beside, whose joy my song so flattered,
If they still live, wide through the world are scattered.

And grasps me now a long unwonted yearning
For that serene and solemn spirit-land;
My song, to faint Æolian murmurs turning,
Sways like a harp-string by the breezes fanned.
I thrill and tremble; tear on tear is burning,
And the stern heart is tenderly unmanned:
What I possess, I see far distant lying,
And what is lost, grows real and undying.

Prelude.

After this dedication follows a "Prelude on the Stage"—a conversation between the manager, the poet and the Merry-Andrew, or humorous person of the company. The manager demands something that will please the public, who have read so much that they have

become fastidious in their tastes; his preference would be a sort of literary hash, containing so many elements that each hearer will be certain to pick out something appropriate to himself, and all will go home pleased. The Merry-Andrew insists that there must be plenty of fun and folly in the piece; while the poet vainly protests against suh a debasement of his art, and finally exclaims to the manager: "Go, find yourself a more obedient slave!" The Merry-Andrew answers him with ridicule, and gives his idea of what the world should be in the following words:

> In motley pictures little light,
> Much error, and of truth a glimmering mite.
> Thus the best beverage is supplied,
> Whence all the world is cheered and edified.

The manager then puts an end to the discussion by commanding that the work shall be commenced at once. He shows his sordid business nature, his utter ignorance of the poetic character by saying:

> What need to talk of inspiration?
> 'Tis no companion of delay.
> If poetry be your vocation,
> Let poetry your will obey.

He offers all the properties of his theatre—beasts, birds, sun, stars, fire and water, and closes the scene by saying that if they are properly used,

> Thus, in our booth's contracted sphere,
> The circle of creation will appear,

And move as we deliberately impel,
From heaven, across the world to hell!

Prologue in Heaven.

To this introduction succeeds a "Prologue in Heaven," imitated from the commencement of the *Book of Job*. It begins with a chant of the Archangels:

The Sun orb sings, in emulation,
'Mid brother-spheres, his ancient round:
His path predestined through creation
He ends with steps of thunder sound.
The angels from his visage splendid
Draw power, whose measure none can say;
The lofty works, uncomprehended,
Are bright as on the earliest day.

Gabriel.—And swift, and swift beyond conceiving,
The splendor of the world goes round,
Day's Eden-brightness still relieving
The awful night's intense profound:
The ocean tides in foam are breaking,
Against the rocks' deep bases hurled,
And both the spheric race partaking,
Eternal, swift, are onward whirled!

Michael.—And rival storms abroad are surging
From sea to land, from land to sea.
A chain of deepest action forging
Round all, in wrathful energy.
There flames a desolation, blazing
Before the thunder's crashing way:
Yet, Lord, thy messengers are praising
The gentle movement of thy day.

The Three.—Though still by them uncomprehended,
From these the angels draw their power,
And all thy works, sublime and splendid,
Are bright as in creation's hour.

Mephistopheles then steps forward, and in a brutal, sneering speech, gives his opinion of the human race. The Lord asks him if he knows his servant, Faust. Thereupon Mephistopheles offers to bet that he will win Faust's soul, if permission be granted. The Lord answers that he is free to try; that man errs as long as he strives and aspires; but he tells Mephistopheles in advance that in the end he will stand ashamed to see that a good man, through all the obscurity of his natural impulses, still in his heart has an instinct of the one true way. Mephistopheles, however, accepts, without the least fear that he shall fail. The words which Goethe puts in the mouth of the Lord intimate that evil is a necessary part of the creative plan.

> Man's active nature, flagging, seeks too soon the level;
> Unqualified repose he learns to crave;
> Whence willingly the comrade him I gave,
> Who works, excites, and must create, as devil.

The "Prelude on the Stage" presents, in sharp, satirical outlines, the relation of the poet to his own time. It shows that Goethe expected no popularity for his work—nay, no intelligent comprehension of its meaning. It must be read as a piece of defiant irony. The Prologue indicates the grand ethical idea underlying the whole poem. Only the form is taken from Job; the problem is stated in different terms, and worked out through an entirely new and original presentation of the life of man. But the manner in which Goethe has done this cannot be understood without reading the second part, for the two form one connected piece, with

a coherence as clearly marked as in the trilogy of Æschylus, or in that which Schiller wrote.

First Scene.

We now reach the first scene of the tragedy. It is night, and Faust, in an old Gothic chamber, begins his soliloquy. He has studied philosophy, jurisprudence, medicine and theology, and finds himself no whit the wiser than before. His dreary conclusion is that nothing can be known. Then, too, he has failed in obtaining worldly fortune; he has neither lands nor gold, honor nor consideration among men. As a last experiment he has turned to magic, hoping that he may detect the secret forces of nature, the undiscovered germs of all power, and rummage no more among empty words. A sense of the free delight of physical life, which he has so long given up for the sake of study, comes over him; he longs to leave his smoky den, his jars and skeletons, and live the life of the body in the open air. In this soliloquy we find not only the early experience of Goethe, but the early conflict between the physical and intellectual natures of men.

Faust contemplates the cabalistic signs of the Earth spirit, and then invokes its appearance. The spirit is revealed in a ruddy flame, but Faust turns away his head, unable to endure the vision. The spirit says:

In the tides of life, in action's storm,
A fluctuant wave,
A shuttle free,
Birth and the grave,

An eternal sea,
A weaving, flowing
Life, all glowing;
Thus at time's humming loom 'tis my hand prepares
The garment of life which the deity wears!

There is a profound meaning in the words with which the spirit departs:

Thou'rt like the spirit which thou comprehendest,
Not me!

Faust is now interrupted by the entrance of Wagner, his famulus, who represents the ordinary, mechanical man, without a spark of original thought, and whom all the education in the world only turns into a shallow pedant. The German critics consider him as the type of a philister—a term which they apply to the class of stupid, commonplace, conventional individuals who enter largely into society. Wagner's remarks only increase Faust's disgust and impatience, and after his departure he resumes the soliloquy, finds every view of life discouraging, every prospect of attaining satisfactory knowledge hopeless, and is gradually led from one morbid impulse to another, until he settles on the thought of suicide.

And now come down, thou cup of crystal clearest,
Fresh from thine ancient cover thou appearest,
So many years forgotten to my thoughts!
Thou shon'st at old ancestral banquets cheery,
The solemn guests thou madest merry.
When one thy wassail to the other brought,
The rich and skillful fingers o'er thee wrought,

The drinker's duty, rhyme-wise to explain them,
Or in one breath, below the mark to drain them,
From many a night of youth my memory caught.
Now to a neighbor shall I pass thee never,
Nor on thy curious art to test my wit endeavor:
Here is a juice whence sleep is swiftly born.
It fills with browner flood thy crystal hollow;
I chose, prepared it: thus I follow,—
With all my soul the fatal drink I swallow,
A solemn festal cup, a greeting to the morn!
(He sets the goblet to his mouth.)

Chorus of Angels.—Christ is risen!
Joy to the Mortal One,
Whom the unmerited,
Clinging, inherited
Needs did imprison.

Faust.—What hollow humming, what a sharp, clear stroke,
Drives from my lips the goblet's at their meeting?
Announce the booming bells already woke
The first glad hour of Easter's festal year?
Ye choirs, have ye begun the sweet consoling chant,
Which through the night of death, the angel ministrant
Sang, God's new covenant repeating?

Chorus of Women.—With spices and precious
Balms we arrayed him;
Faithful and gracious,
We tenderly laid him:
Linen to bind him
Cleanlily wound we:
Ah! when we would find him,
Christ no more found we!

Chorus of Angels.—Christ is ascended!
Bliss hath invested him,—
Woes that molested him,
Trials that tested him,
Gloriously ended!

Faust.—Why here in dust entice me with your spell,
Ye gentle, powerful sounds of heaven?
Peal rather there, where tender natures dwell.

Your messages I hear, but faith has not been given;
The dearest child of faith is miracle.
I venture not to soar to yonder regions,
Whence the glad tidings thither float;
And yet from childhood up, familiar with the note,
To life it now renews the old allegiance.
Once heavenly love sent down a burning kiss
Upon my brow, in Sabbath silence holy;
And, filled with mystic presage, chimed the church-bell slowly,
And prayer dissolved me in a fervent bliss.
A sweet, uncomprehended yearning
Drove forth my feet through woods and meadows free,
And while a thousand tears were burning,
I felt a world arise for me.

These chants, to youth and all its sports appealing,
Proclaimed the spring's rejoicing holiday;
And memory holds me now with childish feeling
Back from the last, the solemn way.
Sound on, ye hymns of heaven, so sweet and mild!
My tears gush forth, the earth takes back her child!

Chorus of Disciples.—Has he, victoriously,
Burst from the vaulted
Grave, and all-gloriously
Now sits exalted?
Is he in glow of birth,
Rapture creative near?
Ah! to the woe of earth
Still we are native here.
We, his aspiring
Followers, him we miss;
Weeping, desiring,
Master, thy bliss.

Chorus of Angels.—Christ is risen,
Out of corruption's womb:
Burst ye the prison,
Break from your gloom!
Praising and pleading him,

Brotherly feeding him,
Preaching and speeding him,
Blessing, succeeding him,
Thus is the Master near—
Thus is he here.

Second Scene.

The second scene is before the city gate, on the Easter holiday. Citizens, students, servant girls, beggars and soldiers make their appearance. Each one speaks in his or her character, and the result is a motley animated picture of life. Faust passes through the crowd, feeling his desire renewed to be simply a man among men. Accompanied by Wagner, he walks onward to the crest of a neighboring hill, where the sight of sunset calls forth a grand and impassioned monologue. As the dusk begins to gather, they notice a black dog running around them in circles, gradually drawing nearer. Wagner thinks it is only a stray poodle who is hunting his master, but Faust imagines that a trail of fire follows the animal. He returns to his quarters, taking the dog with him. The third and fourth scenes are in Faust's study. He begins to translate the first chapter of John, while the dog lies on a cushion behind the stove. But he growls and barks fearfully at each repetition of the text. Faust suspects the presence of an evil spirit in the beast and proceeds to exorcise it by the usual formula of magic. The spell at last is dissolved, and Mephistopheles steps forth in the costume of a traveling student. In answer to Faust's questions, he declares himself to be

Part of the power, not understood,
Which always wills the bad and works the good;

and again he says:

I am the spirit that denies,

explaining that his proper element is Evil, in all its forms. This is the part which he plays throughout the whole poem. He is not Satan, but an intellectual devil who works by always presenting the opposite of Good. He argues rather than directly tempts, and assures his power over Faust by trains of reasoning which the latter cannot answer, because they are the echoes of his own doubts. Mephistopheles is one of the most remarkable creatures in literature. His cunning, his subtlety, his scorching ridicule and savage cynicism form a compound which is only a little more than human, and is not completely infernal. He is the echo of all the reckless and defiant unbelief of the whole human race; in him are concentrated their rebellious impulses, their indulgence, their negation of Virtue, Love and Faith, and herein lies the secret of his power. To look upon him as a conventional devil would lead us to misunderstand him entirely. Like the very qualities of human nature which he represents, he "always wills the Bad, and works the Good"—that is in spite of himself.

The Compact.

Mephistopheles lulls Faust into slumber by the song of the attendant spirits—a wild, almost unearthly, chant, which hints at the delight of the senses without

expressing any intelligible thought. He returns next day, and so prays upon Faust's impatient, despairing mood, that the latter curses everything in which he formerly believed, and at last, satisfied that all forms of happiness have become impossible to him, exclaims:

Faust.—When on an idler's bed I stretch myself in quiet,
There let, at once, my record end!
Canst thou with lying flattery rule me,
Until self-pleased myself I see,—
Canst thou with rich enjoyment fool me,
Let that day be the last for me!
The bet I offer.

Mephistopheles.— Done!

Fau.— And heartily!
When thus I hail the moments flying:
"Ah, still delay—thou art so fair!"
Then bind me in thy bonds undying,
My final ruin then declare!

Then let the death-bell chime the token,
Then art thou from my service free!
The clock may stop, the hand be broken,
Then time be finished unto me!

This is the compact, and we must remember the words which give Mephistopheles power over Faust. He must experience a sense of happiness so pure and complete that he will say to the passing moment: "Ah, still delay—thou art so fair!" Through perfect happiness he will lose his soul; yet how shall Mephistopheles evolve happiness from evil? Either way there seems to be a paradox—a moral contradiction—and the solution of this riddle is the basis upon which both parts of the poem rests. Faust exclaims, after the compact is made:

Plunge we in time's tumultuous dance,
In the rush and roll of circumstance!
Then may delight and distress,
And worry and success,
Alternately follow, as best they can:
Restless activity proves the man!

While Faust retires to prepare for his new life in the world, a student calls. Mephistopheles puts on Faust's cap and mantle, passes himself off for the learned professor, and takes the opportunity to give his views upon logic, theology and medicine. His remarks are so shrewd and his satire so keen that the student is profoundly impressed, and at the close of the interview requests an autograph in his album. The entire scene is a masterpiece of irony.

Margaret.

Goethe called the scene in the witches' kitchen a piece of "dramatic nonsense." Faust, looking in the witches' mirror, sees the form of Margaret, which at once takes possession of his fancy. The witch gives him a magic potion to drink, which repairs the waste of his body in studies and restores his youthful vigor. Then follow those simple exquisite passages in which Margaret is the heroine. Faust first sees her returning from confession, when she refuses his proffered escort; but by the aid of Mephistopheles and an old neighbor named Martha, he obtains an interview in the garden, and soon succeeds in inspiring a return of his love. Margaret's perfect innocence and her simple trust in him awaken his sense of remorse. The latent good in

his nature drives him from her, lest he should become the instrument of her ruin; but Mephistopheles, by painting her loneliness and yearning for the absent lover, brings him back again. Next comes the celebrated scene wherein Faust gives his confession of faith, in answer to Margaret's doubts, and from this point the tragic portion of the story begins. Margaret's prayer to the Virgin is the passionate appeal of a loving and suffering heart. If ever tears were expressed in words, it is in those marvelous stanzas. It is remarkable that, although Margaret is a simple, ignorant girl, accustomed to hard work and not to sentiment, although she is vain and imprudent and yields to her fate from the first, without making the least resistance, no imaginary woman in literature, not even Imogen, Cordelia or Ophelia, excites so tender a sympathy in the reader. The conception of her character is not only energetic but daring. She is simply a woman as innocent as Eve in Eden. Sin, crime and madness visit her, but we feel that she is their helpless victim, and that the original purity of her nature can take no permanent stain.

The tragical events thicken. Margaret's mother never awakes from a sleeping potion, administered without evil intent. Her brother, Valentin, attacks Faust in the street and is slain by him. Faust and Mephistopheles fly from the city, and she is left alone.

The Walpurgis-night.

Then follows the "Carnival of the Witches," among the Hartz mountains, on the Walpurgis-night, which is

the first of May. With the opening lines we begin to breathe a supernatural, almost a diabolical atmosphere. All is weird, strange and ghostly. Will-o-the-wisps dance along the path; a tempest rushes down the gorges, tearing up the trees by the roots; showers of sparks fly through the air; and the red moon hangs low on the borders of the sky. The witch scenes in *Macbeth* are ghastly enough, but they have not the lurid, unearthly atmosphere of the Walpurgis-night. As we move along with the fitful dance or stormy sweep of the rhythm, we feel as if in the presence of powers brought from another and darker world. Mephistopheles here again reveals his true character, but he cannot persuade Faust to take part in the revels. His thoughts are with Margaret, and he sees her at last, as a phantom, wherein her fate is revealed to him.

The intermezzo, called "Oberon and Titania's Golden Wedding," has really nothing to do with *Faust.* Goethe originally wrote it as a series of epigrams, under the title of *Xenien,* which he sent to Schiller for publication in the *Hours.* Schiller, however, judged it best not to revive the excitement caused by this publication, which was beginning to subside, and returned it to Goethe, suggesting that he might use it in another way. Thus it came to be interpolated into *Faust.* It is a collection of very short, sharp stanzas, which snap and sting like a whip-lash, describing Goethe's literary enemies under names which allow the real persons to be guessed.

Returning to the tragedy, we next encounter Faust in a state bordering upon madness. He has learned that

Margaret is imprisoned and condemned to death for infanticide. His remorse and passion are so frantically expressed that Mephistopheles, devil as he is, begins to be frightened. He consents to carry Faust to Margaret's dungeon, and give his assistance in carrying her off.

One more scene concludes the first part—the interview between Margaret and Faust in the dungeon. Margaret, rendered insane by her misery—and we are given to understand that the crime for which she is condemned was committed—does not recognize her lover. She takes Faust to be the jailer, and pleads piteously for her life. At last she begins to remember, but dimly and incoherently; she takes no notice of Faust's agonizing efforts to persuade her to fly with him.

Margaret.—My mother have I put to death;
I've drowned the baby born to thee.
Was it not given to thee and me?
Thee, too—'tis thou! It scarcely true doth seem—
Give me thy hand! 'Tis not a dream!
Thy dear, dear hand!—But ah, 'tis wet!
Why, wipe it off! Methinks that yet
There's blood thereon.
Ah, God! what hast thou done?
Nay, sheathe thy sword at last!
Do not affray me!

Faust.—Oh, let the past be past!
Thy words will slay me!

Mar.—No, no! thou must outlive us.
Now I'll tell thee the graves to give us:
Thou must begin to-morrow
The work of sorrow.
The best place give to my mother,
Then close at her side my brother,

And me a little away,
But not too very far, I pray!
And here, on my right breast, my baby lay.
Nobody else will lie beside me.
Ah, within thy arms to hide me,
That were a sweet and gracious bliss.
But no more, no more can I attain it.
I would force myself on thee and constrain it,
And it seems thou repellest my kiss:
And yet 'tis thou, so good, so kind to see!

Fau.—If thou feel'st it is I, then come with me!

Mar.—Out yonder?

Fau.—To freedom.

Mar.—If the grave is there,
Death lying in wait, then come!
From here to eternal rest:
No further step—no, no!
Thou goest away! Oh, Henry, if I could go!

Fau.—Thou canst! Just will it! Open stands the door.

Mar.—I dare not go; there's no hope any more.
Why should I fly? They'll still my steps waylay!
It is so wretched, forced to beg my living,
And a bad conscience sharper misery giving!
It is so wretched to be strange, forsaken,
And I'd still be followed and taken!

Fau.—I'll stay with thee.

Mar.—Be quick! be quick!
Save thy perishing child!
Away! Follow the ridge
Up by the brook,
Over the bridge,
Into the wood,
To the left, where the plank is placed
In the pool!
Seize it in haste!
'Tis trying to rise!
'Tis struggling still!
Save it! Save it!

Fau.—Recall thy wandering will!
One step, and thou art free at last.

Mar.—If the mountain we had only passed!
There sits my mother upon a stone,—
I feel an icy shiver!
There sits my mother upon a stone,
And her head is wagging ever.
She beckons, she nods not, her heavy head falls o'er.
She slept so long that she wakes no more.
She slept while we were caressing;
Ah, those were in the days of blessing!

Fau.—Her words and prayers are nothing worth;
I'll venture, then, to bear thee forth.

Mar.—No—let me go! I'll suffer no force!
Grasp me not so murderously!
I've done all things else for the love of thee.

Fau.—The day dawns: Dearest! Dearest!

Mar.—Day? Yes, the day comes—the last day breaks for me!
My wedding-day it was to be!
Tell no one thou hast been with Margaret!
Woe for my garland! The chances
Are over—'tis all in vain!
We shall meet once more again,
But not at the dances!
The crowd is thronging, no word is spoken:
The square below
And the streets overflow:
The death-bell tolls, the wand is broken.
I am seized, and bound and delivered—
Shoved to the block—they give the sign!
Now over each neck has quivered
The blade that is quivering over mine.
Dumb lies the world like the grave!

Fau.—Oh, had I ne'er been born!

Mephistopheles.—Off! or you're lost ere morn.
Useless talking, delaying and praying!
My horses are neighing:
The morning twilight is near.

Mar.—What rises up from the threshold here?
He! he! suffer him not!
What does he want in this holy spot?
He seeks me!

Fau.—Thou shalt live.

Mar.—Judgment of God! myself to thee I give.

Meph.—(To Faust.) Come! or I'll leave her in the lurch, and thee!

Mar.—Thine am I, Father! rescue me!
Ye angels, holy cohorts, guard me,
Camp round, and from evil ward me!
Henry, I shudder to think of thee.

Meph.—She is judged.

Voice.—(From above.) She is saved.

Meph.—(To Faust.) Hither to me!
(He disappears with Faust.)

Voice.—(From within.) Henry! Henry!

The Second Part.

This is the end of *Faust*, so far as known to most readers; but it will be noticed that the evolution of the great plan is only commenced; the riddle has not even approached its explanation. Of all the usual experiences of men, Faust has only been drawn to love, but love so interfused with conscience and remorse that the happy moment has not yet blessed him. The compact with Mephistopheles still holds; he has not won his wager; although we may guess that he thinks so.

After the compact was made he said to Faust, "We will see the little and then the great world." By the "little world" he means the individual experiences of the emotions and passions of human nature; and this

is the reason that Faust was made young again by the magic draught in the witches' kitchen. By the "great world" he means the experiences of a life moving on a broad field of activity, among men, and in stations where its influence will be felt by thousands, or millions of the human race. In the greater world Mephistopheles has every opportunity to display his evil talent, and to annihilate the germs of good which baffle him in Faust's nature. The second part is therefore wholly different in its character. It is crowded with characters and its events are displayed on a grand stage—so grand, indeed, that Goethe was forced to introduce the element of allegory, and make single persons typify whole classes of society. It requires a philosophical mind to appreciate this part properly, because Faust loses something of his strong, human individuality by coming under the control of ideas instead of passions. He leaves behind him the experiences through which he touches the lives of all men, and rises to those wherein he touches only the lives of the men who think and aspire.

In the opening scene we find Faust sleeping, while Ariel, accompanied by Æolian harps, chants the progressive watches of the night, the restorative influences of Nature. This chant embodies an important feature of Goethe's creed, which he has expressed more fully in other works. He believed most devoutly in preserving moral and spiritual health. If there is a moral wound it must be healed, leaving perhaps a scar behind it; but it must not be kept as an open sore. The chronic inflammation of remembrance and remorse must be

avoided. The true atonement for a wrong committed does not lie in nursing the pain it leaves, but in restoration to cheerfulness and courage and hope, for the sake of others.

Faust awakes to a scene of sunrise among the Alps, a piece of superb description. We learn that his nature is calmed and refreshed—that, forgetting the past, he is ready to face life with fresh courage. In fact, he afterward refers only once to anything in the first part.

The next scene introduces us to the court of the emperor, who appears on his throne, surrounded by his ministers and lords. Mephistopheles has taken the place of court fool. The various ministers make reports, each more discouraging than the other. The treasury is empty; the realm is lawless and disorganized; the knights and burghers are at war, and the allies and tributary states are unfaithful. Money, however, is the great need, and Mephistopheles proposes to supply it by digging up all the treasures buried in the soil since the old Roman times. The proposition meets with favor, but the subject is postponed until after the Carnival, which is near at hand.

The Carnival.

The Carnival is an allegorical masquerade, representing Society. The young of both sexes appear as flower-girls and gardeners. Intriguing mothers, with marriageable daughters; rude, offensive natures; social mountebanks, parasites, roués; the Graces, typifying

refinement; the Furies, emblematic of slander and malice; Victory, mounted on an elephant, which is guided by Prudence, while Fear and Hope walk on either side; a chariot driven by a boy personifying Poetry, while Plutus sits within and Avarice hangs on behind—all these characters meet and mingle as they are found in the society of the world. The part of Plutus is taken by Faust, while Mephistopheles wears the mask of Avarice. The emperor himself appears as Pan, attended by fauns, satyrs, nymphs and gnomes. The form of the verse constantly varies in this scene; it is full of the richest and rarest rhythmical effects; yet there are in it passages which remind us of Carlyle's criticism: "The outward meaning seems unsatisfactory enough."

In the next scene the emperor finds the aspect of affairs completely changed. The treasury is filled, the troops are paid, commerce flourishes and the whole realm is prosperous. He learns that, during the confusion of the Carnival, he has been persuaded to sign a document, which was really a decree for the issuing of paper money, redeemable in gold—after the buried Roman treasures shall be discovered and dug up. Some of the features of this scene are taken from the Mississippi scheme of John Law, though it was Goethe's first intention to deal with politics instead of finance, and it is to be regretted that he afterward changed his plan. Mephistopheles presents Faust to the emperor as the originator of the paper money, and the latter appoints him with the chancellor, to direct the finances of the realm. In this scheme we see the effort of Mephistopheles to initiate Faust into public life as the surest means

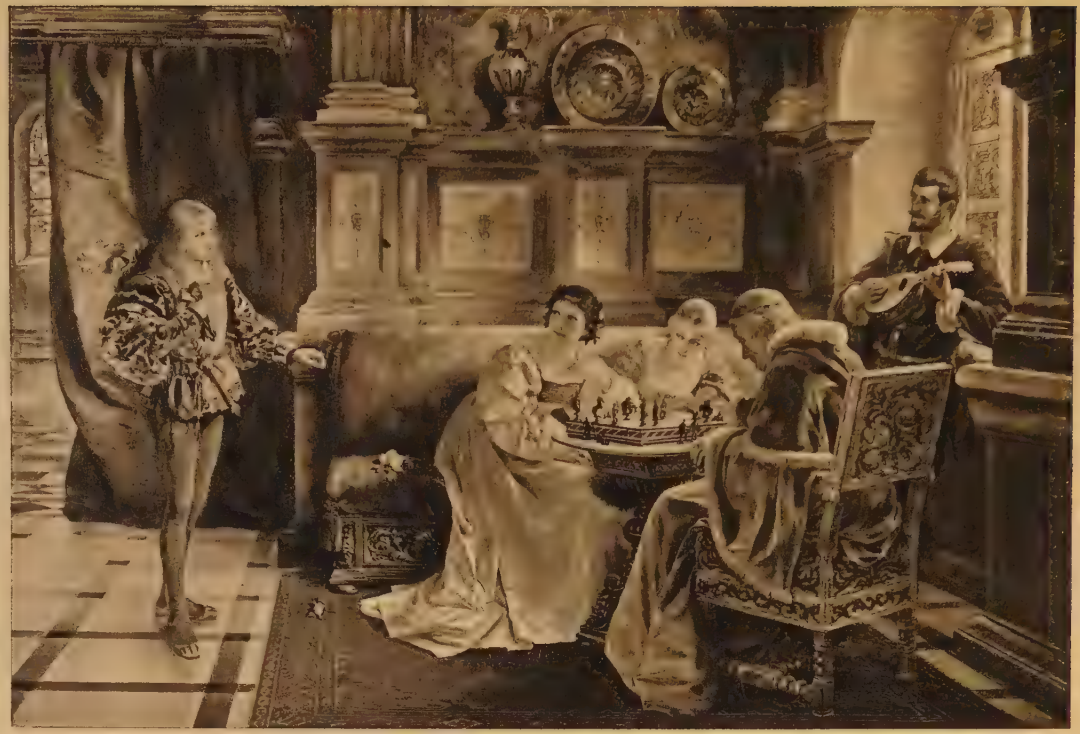
FRANZ TAKING LEAVE

After an original painting by P. Gervais

ADELAIDE. *Leave me. The walls are treacherous.*
Leave me.
Be always loving and faithful, and the
noblest award awaits you.

FRANCOIS. *The noblest reward! Permit me only to*
live till then.

FRANZ TAKING LEAVE, GOETZ VON BERLICHINGEN.—GOETHE.



to corrupt him; but we shall soon find that the evil nature has made a mistake.

Helen.

The emperor is so impressed by Faust's marvelous power that he desires a special exhibition of his art; and he commands him to summon the shades of Paris and Helen to appear before the court. This was a part of the original Faust-legend, and was retained in some of the puppet plays. Faust calls Mephistopheles to his aid, but the latter hesitates to assist him, for the task is difficult and dangerous: Faust must descend to the "Mothers," who are vague existences dwelling beyond the bounds of Time and Space, holding in his hand a key which Mephistopheles gives him, and touching with it a tripod. The court assembles; Faust rises with the tripod; Paris appears, and then Helen. The members of the court criticises their beauty in the orthodox fashionable style, with fulsome praise or absurd censure. But we see that Faust is seized with a passionate adoration of the beauty of Helen, and we now begin to suspect that she is something more than a mere form. She represents, in fact, the abstract sense of Beauty, the informing spirit of all art, the basis of the highest human culture. The honors heaped upon him by the emperor, the hollow splendor of court life, have only touched the surface of Faust's nature. This vision of an ideal of Beauty masters and draws him after it.

In the second part we are introduced to Faust's old chamber, and to his famulus, Wagner, who has taken

his place, and is trying, like the alchemists of the Middle Ages, to elaborate a human being, a homunculus, by mixing together the chemical substances of which the body is composed. Mephistopheles, by a trick, makes the experiment successful, and the homunculus guides him and Faust to the Pharsalian fields, on the banks of the Peneios, in Thessaly. Here we have a classical, or Grecian Walpurgis-night, in contrast to the Gothic one of the first part. Faust has but one thought —to find Helen—whilst Mephistopheles wanders about among the forms of the earliest mythology, feeling rather uncomfortable, and a little uncertain what course to pursue.

The number of characters is very great. Griffins, pygmies, sphinxes, syrens, Chiron the Centaur, Emmets, Dactyls, Lamiæ, the Phorkyads, Thales, Anaxagoras, Nereus, Proteus, Nereids and Tritons, Telchines of Rhodes, and the sea-nymph Galatea, all take part in this wonderful moonlight spectacle. Much of the action has no connection with Faust. Thales and Anaxagoras are the representatives of the Neptunic and Plutonic theories in geology, and Goethe, as a Neptunist, takes special pains to ridicule the opposite views. All this, however, must be set aside. Then by carefully examining what is left we find that it represents the gradual growth of the element of beauty in art and religion, from the first rude beginnings in Phœnicia and Egypt until it culminates in the perfect symmetry of the Grecian mind. Since Goethe gives a moral, even a saving power to Beauty, his object is now not difficult to understand.

Faust, meanwhile, has gone to Hades to implore Persephone to release Helen; but we are not informed how this is accomplished. As a specimen of the versification of the classical Walpurgis-night, the following is the chorus of the Telchines of Rhodes:

> We've forged for old Neptune the trident that urges
> To smoothness and peace the refractory surges.
> When Jove tears the clouds of the tempest asunder,
> 'Tis Neptune encounters the roll of the thunder:
> The lightnings above may incessantly glow,
> But wave upon wave dashes up from below,
> And all that, between them, the terrors o'erpower,
> Long tossed and tormented, the deep shall devour;
> And thence he has lent us his sceptre to-day.
> Now float we contented in festal array.

The Helena.

The third act is usually called *The Helena.* The scene opens in Sparta, whither Helen has just returned from Troy, in advance of Menelaus. Mephistopheles appears as Phorkyas, a hideous old woman, and Helen being Primitive Beauty, he, of course, is obliged to become Primitive Ugliness. Helen, flying from the vengeance of Menelaus, finds herself suddenly in the court-yard of a Gothic castle, the lord of which is Faust. He makes her queen of his domain; their nuptials are celebrated, and they become the parents of a son, Euphorion. In all this there is a double allegory. Helen is not only the ideal of the Beautiful, which rescues Faust from the excesses of passion and worldly ambition, but she also stands for the classical element in

literature and art. Faust is not only the type of man, working his way upward by the development of his faculties, but he also stands for the romantic element in literature and art. This secondary meaning is added to the primary idea upon which the work is based. Euphorion, therefore, is the union of the classic and romantic spirits in one person. He is a perfect embodiment of Goethe's own poetry; but as Byron's death, at the time when this act was written, powerfully affected Goethe, he determined to make Euphorion a distinct representative of Byron. The act closes with the death of Euphorion and the disappearance of Helen, whose garments, left behind her, turn into clouds and bear Faust away. As a specimen of literary art, the *Helena* is matchless; the more it is read and studied the more its wonderful beauty grows upon the reader. The first half is written in pure Greek metres, the latter half in short rhymed stanzas that sound like the clash of cymbals. The following is the dirge sung by the chorus on the death of Euphorion, wholly descriptive of Byron:

Not alone, where'er thou bidest;
For we know thee what thou art.
Ah! if from the day thou hidest,
Still to thee will cling each heart.
Scarce we venture to lament thee,
Singing, envious of thy fate;
For in storm and sun were lent thee
Song and courage, fair and great.

Ah! for earthly fortune fashioned,
Strength was thine, and proud descent.
Early erring, o'er-impassioned,

Youth, alas! from thee was rent.
For the world thine eye was rarest,
All the heart to thee was known;
Thine were loves of women fairest,
And a song thy very own.
Yet thou rannest uncontroll'dly
In the nets the fancies draw,
Thus thyself divorcing boldly
As from custom, so from law;
Till the highest thoughts expended
Set at last thy courage free:
Thou wouldst win achievement splendid,
But it was not given to thee.

Unto whom, then? Question dreary,
Destiny will never heed;
When in evil days and weary,
Silently the people bleed.
But new songs shall still elate them:
Bow no longer and deplore!
For the soil shall generate them,
As it hath done heretofore.

The fourth act was written in Goethe's eighty-second year, and is the least important of all. Faust cannot live and find the satisfaction of his life in the service of the Beautiful, but its garments bear him above the stony ways of the Earth, and it is thenceforth his comfort and the consecration of his days. He now insists on a new field of activity; he means to compel Nature to the service of Man. There is a part of the emperor's realm uninhabitable, because at times inundated by the sea; this he will dike and drain; make fit for population and people with active colonists. Mephistopheles is bound to obey his commands, and the greater part of the act is taken up with the description of a battle which

is won for the emperor by his assistance. In return Faust is presented with a title to the vast sea-swept marshes he desires to possess.

In the fifth act Faust rules as a sovereign over the land won from the ocean. Where the waves formerly raged, meadows, gardens, woods and villages now meet the eye. Mephisto and the spirits have to help in the great work, but where they can mingle evil with it in their devilish malice. Instead of commerce and navigation they carry on piracy, and where their sovereign bids them enforce obedience by pacific means, they burn and slaughter. Faust begins to feel that he will not really attain to liberty until he banishes magic from his path. Then Care approaches him, he restrains himself from exercising his magic power on her, but neither does he need to do so, for Care cannot overcome him, and in vain tries to terrify him with words; even though he is stricken blind by her breath, there is still daylight in his soul, and unrestingly as before he urges on his people in their work.

At last the great life-work of Faust is accomplished. There is a fertile, populous province, intersected by navigable canals in place of the sea. A harbor for commerce has been built, and near it, in the midst of the gardens, stands the palace of Faust. Only two things remain to be done—to drain the last remnant of marsh and to get possession of a little chapel and cottage near at hand, belonging to an old couple, who refuse to sell or leave it. Faust has not yet found his perfectly happy moment, though he is now nearly one hundred years old. Mephistopheles, whom we may suppose to be very

impatient by this time, endeavors to hasten matters by frightening the old couple to death and burning down the cottage and chapel. Faust curses the rash, inhuman deed, and Mephistopheles is once more baffled.

We feel now that the end approaches. The scene changes to midnight, before the palace of Faust. Four gray women enter; one is Want, another Guilt, the third Necessity, and the fourth Care. The palace is barred against them—Want, Guilt and Necessity retire, but Care slips in through the key-hole. Faust defies her, whereupon she breathes on his eyes and he becomes blind. But, in exchange for the external darkness, his spirit is filled with light, and at last he sees clearly. He urges on the work with haste and energy; "one mind," he says, "suffices for a thousand hands." He gropes along, feeling his way out of the palace, and listens to the clattering of the spades, which, day and night, are employed in draining the last marsh. He feels that he has overcome the hostile forces of Nature, and created new homes for thousands of the human race. Filled with this grand consciousness he exclaims:

> Yes! to this thought I hold with firm persistence;
> The last result of wisdom stamps it true;
> He only earns his freedom and existence,
> Who daily conquers them anew.
> Thus here, by dangers girt, shall glide away
> Of childhood, manhood, age, the vigorous day:
> And such a throng I fain would see,—
> Stand on free soil among a people free!
> Then dared I hail the moment fleeing:
> "Ah, still delay—thou art so fair!"
> The traces cannot of mine earthly being
> In æons perish,—they are there!—

In proud fore-feeling of such lofty bliss,
I now enjoy the highest moment—this!

He has said the words; the compact is at an end; and he sinks to the ground, dead. Mephistopheles has won, to all appearance. Standing beside the body, he calls up the hosts of Hell to surround him and take joint possession of the soul. But while he addresses them in a strain of blasphemous exultation, a glory of light falls from above. The angels appear, scattering celestial roses, and chanting:

Roses, ye glowing ones,
Balsam-bestowing ones,
Fluttering, quivering,
Sweetness delivering,
Branching unblightedly,
Budding delightedly,
Bloom and be seen!
Springtime declare him,
In purple and green!
Paradise bear him,
The sleeper serene!

The devils are driven back by this shower of roses, which burn them worse than the infernal pitch and sulphur; the angels seize and bear aloft the immortal part of Faust, and Mephistopheles is left to gnash his teeth in impotent rage.

The last scene is laid in heaven. After chants of ecstatic adoration by the souls of saints the angels, who bear the spirit of Faust, sing—and the words are worthy of our attention:

The noble spirit now is free,
And saved from evil scheming;
Whoe'er aspires unweariedly
Is not beyond redeeming.
And if he feels the grace of love
That from on high is given,
The blessed hosts, that wait above,
Shall welcome him to heaven!

These are the elements of Faust's salvation, and they at once recall to our mind the words of our Lord to Mephistopheles in the prologue: "Thou shalt stand ashamed to see that a good man, through all the obscurity of his impulses, still in his heart has an instinct of the one true way."

After further chants by the angels, the Mater Gloriosa—the Virgin Mary, as the protectress of women—soars into space, and the soul of Margaret approaches. She is not yet allowed access to the highest heavenly regions, but the hour of her pardon and purification has come. The following are the closing passages:

Chorus of Women Penitents.—To heights thou'rt speeding
Of endless Eden:
Receive our pleading,
Transcendant maiden,
With mercy laden!

Magna Peccatrix.—By the love before him kneeling,—
Him, thy son, a godlike vision;
By the tears like balsam stealing,
Spite of Pharisees' derision;
By the box, whose ointment precious
Shed its spice and odors cheery;
By the locks, whose softest meshes
Dried the holy feet and weary!—

Mulier Samaritana.—By that well, the ancient station
Whither Abram's flocks were driven;
By the jar, whose restoration
To the Saviour's lips were given;
By the fountain, pure and vernal,
Thence its present bounty spending—
Overflowing, bright, eternal,
Watering the worlds unending!—

Maria Ægyptiaca.—By the place, where the immortal
Body of the Lord hath lain;
By the arm, which, from the portal,
Warning, thrust me back again;
By the forty years' repentance
In the lonely desert land;
By the blissful farewell sentence
Which I wrote upon the sand!—

The Three.—Thou thy presence not deniest
Unto sinful women ever,—
Liftest them to win the highest
Gain of penitent endeavor,—
So, from this good soul withdraw not—
Who but once forgot, transgressing,
Who her loving error saw not—
Pardon adequate, and blessing.

The Penitent (formerly named Margaret).—Incline, O maiden,
With mercy laden,
In light unfading,
Thy gracious countenance upon my bliss!
My loved, my lover,
His trials over
In yonder world, returns to me in this!

Chorus of Boys.—With mighty limbs he towers
Already above us;
He, for this love of ours,
Will richlier love us.
Early were we removed,
Ere life could reach us;
Yet he hath learned and proved,
And he will teach us.

The Penitent (formerly named Margaret).—The spirit-choirs around him seeing
New to himself, he scarce divines
His heritage of new-born being.

When like the holy host he shines.
Behold how he each band hath cloven,
The earthly life hath round him thrown,
And through his garb of ether woven,
The early force of youth is shown!
Vouchsafe to me that I instruct him.
Still dazzles him the day's new glare.

Mater Gloriosa.—Rise thou, to higher spheres!
Conduct him,
Who, feeling thee, shall follow there!

Chorus Mysticus.—All things transitory
But as symbols are sent:
Earth's insufficiency
Here grows to event:
The indescribable,
Here it is done:

The Woman.—Soul leadeth us
Upward and on!

Qualities of the Poem.

Faust, as we have seen, was only finished with Goethe's life, and the second part was not published until after his death. Without studying both, no one can understand the author's plan. The first part alone is a sublime dramatic fragment; the whole is a complete and wonderful poem. There is nothing in the literature of any country with which we can fairly compare it. There is no other poem which, like this, was the work of a whole life, and which so deals with the profoundest problems of all life. It is so universally

comprehensive that every reader finds in it reflections of his faith and philosophy. We have the essay of a French critic, who tries to prove it a gospel of Pantheism; we have the work of a Catholic professor, who is equally sure that it shows Goethe's reverence for the church of Rome; we have the work of a Lutheran clergyman, who illustrates its Protestant orthodoxy by parallel texts from the Bible. These criticisms only show how completely it stands above all barriers of sect, all schools of thought, in that atmosphere of pure humanity where there is no dogma to darken God to the eye of man. The passions and indulgences of youth only bring Faust remorse; place and power at the emperor's court fail to satisfy him; the perception of beauty, which, after all, is only a recognition of the divine harmony, first elevates and purifies his nature, and his happy moment comes at the end, as the result of an unwearied and beneficent activity for the sake of the human race, aided by the Divine love which is freely bestowed upon all men.

The poem embodies all the finest qualities of Goethe's mind—his rich, ever-changing rhythm, his mastery over the elements of passion, his simple realism, his keen irony, his serene wisdom and his most sacred aspirations. The more it is studied, the wider and further it spreads its intellectual horizon, until it grows to be so far and dim that the physical and spiritual spheres are blended together. Whoever studies *Faust*, in connection with the works of other great German authors, cannot but admit that the critic is not wholly mistaken who asserts that the single element which, separately, made his com-

peers great, have combined to make one man greatest; that Klopstock's enrichment of the language, Lessing's boldness and clearness of vision, Wieland's grace, Herder's universality and Schiller's power of rhythm and rhetoric are all united in the immortal work of Goethe.

Analysis.

The principal contrast between the popular play and Goethe's *Faust* is that, in the former, love and enjoyment bring the hero to ruin, while, in the latter, love and activity are his salvation. All the essential elements of the composition are provided by the popular drama; the main difference made by Goethe is that he represents Faust as being at once inflamed by the sight of Helena at the imperial court, for the whole episode of Helena needed to be more compressed; and again, that Helena, instead of being put forward as a temptation of the Devil, is rather represented by Goethe as one of the objects which Faust, in his restless desires, demands from his evil companion. Mephisto chiefly shows himself as a tempter in the fourth act, when he offers the doctor a crown. In the popular drama Faust refuses it; with Goethe he accepts it, but this incident is charged with a fine moral import; Faust accepts the crown, not for the mere sake of possessing it, but to provide himself with a sphere of activity, and in the end his kingdom is his salvation.

The inner connection in the second part is not always quite clear, but we do not notice this when we see all the marvels spread before us. The effect of this second

part is that of a phantasmagoria, and, as in an opera or fairy tale, the incredible and magic element make us less strict in our demands for careful connection and development of the various parts. Each act and scene is most dramatically conceived, and it only needs abridgment to meet the requirements of the stage. While the first part is not divided into acts and scenes, in the second each division has its peculiar tone, and its definite close. We see here the hand of the stage-manager who knows how the multitude must be satisfied, charmed and held in suspense. The poet moves in a motley, fantastic world, in which figures of Classical and Christian religion, creatures of southern and northern superstition, are all mingled together.

Goethe's *Faust* savors throughout of the popular sphere in which the story first originated. Yet, in the third act, when Helena appears, the poet realizes somewhat of the grandeur of Greek tragedy. A prose scene in the first part, in which Faust has just heard of Gretchen's misery, and breaks into bitter execrations of Mephisto, shows the same forcible style as a Shakespearean drama, and sounds as if it might be from Schiller's *Robbers*. Passion is arrayed against passion, and the anger of the one side and the scorn of the other wax intense, with no sparing of coarse, strong language. The same overwhelming effect is produced by the scene in the cathedral, where Gretchen succumbs under the feeling of her guilt, and the horrible babel which stuns her. Very noticeable is the contrast offered by this scene to the earlier and more tender one, in which she prays to the Mater Dolorosa.

A few scenes of the first part are marked by a too close attention to detail, by coarseness, comicality, hostility toward clergy and church; in others we are reminded of poems like *Prometheus* or *Ganymede*, and are transported to higher spheres, above the level of earthly joys and earthly struggles. In one part a gentle naturalism holds sway; in another we breathe the idealism of *Iphigenie*. Sometimes naturalism and idealism are mingled or represented in the same scene in different persons. The two elements are united in the pathetic character of Gretchen, which is essentially a creation of Goethe's earlier manner, dating from the Frankfurt period of his life. He has never created anything more sublime than this ideal picture of innocence, simplicity, warmth and depth of affection; her maidenly reserve at the outset, the spirit of noble purity which breathes around her, her little world of domestic duties, the truly feminine instinct with which she tends her little sister, the natural grace with which she reveals her feelings, the naïve love of ornament natural to a girl of the people; then, the first shadows which fall on this transparent soul, the misgivings roused by Faust's bold address, the presentiment of danger and involuntary shudder felt at Mephisto's presence, her pious anxiety about the spiritual welfare of her lover, her devotion and utter self-surrender to him, her inability to refuse him anything, and, finally, all the fell consequences of her weakness—madness, prison, and death—a fearful transition from the idyllic to the tragical.

Still the charm of innocence clings to Gretchen in the midst of her guilt, and herein the poet shows his

wonderful skill; for he does not try to veil or excuse her offense, and yet he fills us with that love of the heroine which purity alone can inspire. The halo of human forgiveness rests on the head of this good soul—as she is called in the second part—who only once erred, and hardly knew that she was erring. In Shakespeare's Ophelia we have the germ of Gretchen's character; only Gretchen rises above Ophelia. Most of the Gretchen scenes are somewhat ritualistic in treatment, not so forcible as the scene in the cathedral, and not so tender and affecting as her monologue. The mad scene in the prison is based upon an extravagant youthful sketch, which was toned down by the poet's maturer art.

Gretchen's female companions, her neighbor, Frau Marthe, and her contemporary Lieschen, are creations of Goethe's naturalistic period. So, too, is the famulus Wagner, the philistine counterpart of Faust, and akin to the old Hanswurst. But the first part was completed as far as possible in the style of Goethe's cultured realism, and in accordance with the typical method of his ripest art, as we find it in *Hermann and Dorothea.*

The "Prelude on the Stage" contrasts in a typical manner the poet's vocation and the actor's. The songs of the three archangels, which open the "Prologue in Heaven," are an attempt to picture to us the world under its eternal aspects. The suicide scene and the walk on Easter morning afford us typical pictures of human life. The fit of industry which follows, and the affair of the poodle are almost symbolically treated, and Mephisto's character is developed in accordance with the first outlines of it given in the prologue. The poet

now aims at closer connection, more exact determination of time, and greater conciseness. Thus the scene in which Gretchen's brother appears and falls by Faust's hand is made to link directly with the Walpurgis-night. The latter was not completed, and the continuation of it afterward suggested by literary satire somewhat lowered this scene in the public estimation.

In the second part typical realism predominates exclusively; only that the realism disappears more and more, and the typical element alone remains, along with a wealth of allegory and personification. The emperor's court contains nothing but typical characters. Three strong men represent the army of spirits in the fourth act. Three penitent sinners from the New Testament stand by Gretchen's side, in order to give a typical aspect to an otherwise individualized picture of erring innocence. The figures, drawn either from ancient mythology, or, as in the Walpurgis-night, from the storehouse of Goethe's imagination, are made extraordinarily characteristic. A free, fine spirit of Romanticism breathes through the scene in the rocky caves of the Ægean sea, where the sirens repose on the cliffs in the moonshine, while Galatea appears in her shell-chariot, inflames the passion of Homunculus, and draws him on to his death. A vein of spurious symbolism may, however, be noticed in the second part, in many utterances which would be appropriate enough if they came from Goethe's own lips, but are little consonant with the characters in whose mouth he puts them, and in which he either remains obscure or offends where his meaning is understood. The latter may be observed in the

character of Euphorion, Faust and Helena's son, and intended as an impersonation of Byron. Nevertheless, when placed on the stage, Euphorion's graceful youth charms us, and his death affects us deeply.

There is a certain parallelism between the first and second parts. Notes struck in the one are repeated higher up the scale, as it were, in the other, as we should expect from a writer who sets himself to delineate types rather than particular people. Thus in the first part we have a German Walpurgis-night, in the second a classical one; Wagner, Faust's former servant, appears afterward as an independent scholar; an inquisitive student of the first part becomes an arrogant bachelor of arts in the second; Gretchen's wail of despair is turned into a prayer of joy. This parallelism is most observable in the case of Helena, who occupies the same leading position in the second part which Gretchen does in the first. It is not quite clearly brought out in the drama, but must have been a part of the poet's original plan, that the two sinning women should be Faust's good geniuses, who purify and save him from the power of the evil one. Only in the second part we are left to divine for ourselves that the passion with which Helena, like Gretchen, inspires him at first sight, gives way ultimately, like his passion for Gretchen, to nobler feelings. In the drama as it stands there is also considerable abruptness in the sudden transition from Faust as Helena's lover to Faust as the aspiring sovereign of lands wrested from the sea.

Helena stands in twofold contrast; first to the chorus and then to Phorkyas. Helena is the mistress, dignified

in her bearing, self-possessed and calm, even in the presence of death; the chorus, on the other hand, is composed of serving women, whose demeanor is the exact opposite in everything. But though Helena can suffer death with placid dignity, the appearance of Phorkyas fills her with horror; for he represents the extreme of ugliness, as she of beauty. The two, in their opposition, are typical of the great contrast between the beautiful and the hideous which pervades creation. Beauty is everything with Helena; her beauty is her character and her faith. Phorkyas Mephisto, on the contrary, is physically and morally hideous, and delights in all malice and wickedness.

A third contrast may be noticed between Helena and Gretchen. The German burgher-maiden is all unconscious; the Greek goddess is throughout self-conscious; she knows her heart, and feels what is coming, and she acts not from impulse but with full reflection. We cannot believe that Goethe intended in Helena to show us beauty only from its evil side; he must also have meant to show us beauty as a good, Helena proving a blessing to Faust. We may venture to surmise that the rousing of his creative activity was the legacy which Helena bequeathed to her northern friend.

Wilhelm Meister and Faust are the two characters, who, from the emotional, speculative, critical or æsthetic life, pass, under the influence of denying spirits and ideal examples, to a life of useful labor. Both these figures accompanied the poet during the greater part of his life, and both are comparatively good pictures of himself. He was not able to give the last touches of his

art to either of them, but Faust came nearer to perfection than Wilhelm Meister. The former represents the scientific, the latter the æsthetic tendency of Goethe's youth. Like Faust, Goethe had in vain sought satisfaction in all departments of knowledge. Like Faust, he hoped for a short time to find a clue to the mysterious power which binds nature into one whole, in sciences which were of evil fame, in the writings of old chemists and alchemists. Like Faust, he harbored thoughts of suicide. Like Faust, he was not devoid of religious feelings, especially when engaged in contemplating nature as a whole. Like Faust, he had Mephistophelian friends —Merck and Herder, for instance—who made him conscious of his littleness, and thereby gave a stimulus to his efforts. Like Faust, he fell in love with a simple burgher-maiden, and as Gretchen was made miserable by Faust, so Friederike Brion was made miserable by Goethe, though not to such an extent. Like Faust, he always remained conscious of the right path, and though he often went astray, yet he always returned to it. Like Faust, he drew nigh to the Greek gods, and in communion with the immortal creations of Hellenic art and religion found the highest truths dawn upon him. Like Faust, he returned to his northern Fatherland, to a life of activity among his people.

Goethe's contact with the ancient world bore fruit in Germany, though in another sense than with *Faust;* he no longer found his vocation in political and social activity, but in science and poetry alone. Then, when a friend of equal intellectual rank inspired him with new joy in creation, *Faust* was among the first tasks that

engrossed him. The classical Walpurgis-night, Helena, and the final studies which underlay the last developments of the poem, date from the period in which he practised his hand in Greek rhythms and revived the Greek gods in poetry.

Faust is not intended to resemble Goethe in all points, but he represents Goethe's views in all great questions —in the idea that man is meant to struggle, in the conviction of the salvation to be found in hard service, in the maxim which Faust utters when dying, as the last conclusion of wisdom: "He alone deserves liberty, like life, who daily must win it." Herein he was also in harmony with Schiller, whose Tell declares: "I only really enjoy my life when I win it every day afresh." Both in *Wilhelm Meister* and in *Faust* Goethe prizes activity for the common good more highly than the æsthetic and literary interests. Neither the poet, nor the actor, nor the speculative scholar, he seems to think, can attain in their own spheres to such lofty discernment and to such peace of conviction as the man of action. Thus Goethe recommended in poetry what he himself neglected to do in real life.

Meaning of the Poem.

In the characters of Faust and Mephistopheles are represented the continual strife between Good and Evil in man. The first lesson is that man becomes morbid and miserable in seclusion, even though he devotes himself to the acquisition of knowledge. He must also know the life of the body in the open air, and the so-

ciety of his fellow-men. He must feel in himself the passions and impulses of the race; in other words, he must first become a man among men. He must fight through his life with the powers of selfishness, doubt, denial of all good, truth and beauty. Then, the wrong or error which he may have committed must not clog his future development. He must recover health from moral as from physical disease. The passion for the beautiful must elevate and purify him, saving him from all the meanness and littleness which we find in society and in all forms of public life. The restless impulse, which drives him forward, will save him—that is, lead him constantly from one sphere of being to another which is higher and clearer—in spite of error, in spite of temptation, in spite even of vice. Only in constant activity and struggle can he redeem himself—only in working for the benefit of his fellow-beings can he taste perfect happiness. This is the golden current of wisdom which flows through *Faust* from beginning to end.

The Germans of to-day need no spurring in order to take to the life of generally useful activity, which Faust only embraces after having gone astray; everything now seems in favor of these practical men. Meanwhile those who live after Goethe's example, and look on poetry as a sacred and national task, have to struggle against wind and weather and work doubly hard. They also may find encouragement in the words which the angels sing as they bear aloft the soul of Faust:

> Whoe'er aspires unweariedly
> Is not beyond redeeming.

II

Significance of Goethe's Life and Works.

There are a few poetic works which possess an immortal vitality, which so represent the actions and the characters of men, the problem of human nature, or the mysteries of human life, that their interest never grows old, their value never diminishes. The *Iliad* of Homer, Dante's *Divina Commedia*, some of Shakespeare's plays, and Goethe's *Faust*, belong to this class. Works like these were not produced simply through the voluntary action of the mind; they grew by an inevitable law, attracting to them the best creative intelligence of the poet, and, when completed, were greater than he himself could know; for he stood too near them to measure their proportions. The truth that is in them, being of no time and no country, only touches the highest intelligences at first, and is then slowly transmitted to wider and still wider circles. Goethe's long and vigorous life enabled him to watch the impression which the first part of *Faust* gradually produced upon the world; but the second part, only a small portion of which was published before his death, is not yet fully understood and valued as it should be, even by cultivated thinkers. Stu-

dents of the German language are at this day dissuaded from reading it on the ground that it is incomprehensible; and the completion of his sublime plan is charged against the author as the weak mistake of old age.

As Goethe is the dominant figure in modern German literature, so *Faust* is the dominant work among his many creations. It is the one conception which began to fill and inspire him at the age of twenty-one, and remained with him until he sealed up the last pages of the manuscript, on his eighty-second birthday. Cherished thus for sixty-one years, his whole life forms the basis upon which it rests. Xavier Marmier, the distinguished French critic, says: "It was the chosen work of Goethe, the well-beloved child for whom he delighted to gather the riches of science and the precious fruits of inspiration. It was the bright idea, the mistress of his youth, the companion of his mature age, accustomed to keep watch with him, to visit him in his dreams, to live beside him in solitude and society. He bore it tenderly, mysteriously in the depth of his heart, as a lover bears the secret of his first love. He did not reveal its growth neither displayed its beauties nor caprices; happy in having created his Galatea, he took pleasure in seeing her move before his mind, in warming her upon his bosom, and each day giving her a new life by his artistic word, but he kept her for himself alone, and if other eyes peered too closely, he drew the curtain before his masterpiece. Sometimes he was sombre and thoughtful in the midst of society, for he was thinking of Faust; sometimes a king came to see him, and he left royalty in his eagerness to return to Faust."

When we have learned Goethe's plan we also perceive the great difficulties connected with its execution. We may regret that portions of the work were so long delayed, but we are very glad that it was not allowed to remain a fragment. The second part is only obscure in some of its details; one clear and easily traced design runs through it, and the close is a solution of that which is unsolved in the first part. Both should therefore be considered as one connected work, as was Goethe's intention, although neither the publishers, the critics nor the translators pay much regard to it. It is better to pass briefly in review the whole work rather than confine ourselves to the part which is most familiar, and thus only imperfectly explain its meaning.

The Faust Legend.

The legend of Doctor Faustus first took form in the sixteenth century, while the belief in witchcraft and diabolical agencies was still prevalent among the people. It was introduced into literature through the "History of Doctor Faustus, the notorious Magician and Master of the Black Art," which appeared at Frankfort-on-the-Main in 1587, and was the work of a very orthodox Protestant. An English translation of it, published in 1590, furnished Marlowe with the material for a tragedy of that name, first acted in London in 1593. There was an actual Doctor Faust, born in 1490, who studied at the university of Wittenberg, and is said to have been acquainted with Melanchthon. What special reasons there were for making him the hero of a story

cannot be ascertained with any certainty; but the charge of a compact with evil spirits was frequently made against any man of more than usual knowledge. Even Luther believed in the constant activity of a personal and visible devil, whom he imagined he sometimes beheld.

The story varies in different versions, but is substantially as follows: Dr. Faust, having acquired all possible human knowledge, and being still unsatisfied, invoked Satan to grant him the further power he desired. The fiend appeared, and promised to serve him in all things for four and twenty years, on condition of receiving his soul at the end of that time. The compact was made, and signed by Faust with his blood. Then commenced for him a life of indulgence. In an hour or two he was transported to Italy, Egypt, or Constantinople; gold, jewels and splendid banquets came at his call; gardens blossomed; trees bore fruit for him in winter; and no man had power to injure him. The emperor Maximilian summoned him to Innsbruck, and his magic arts were exhibited before the court. He brought back Helen of Troy from the Grecian Hades, but was himself taken captive by her beauty, and forced Satan to reanimate her in order that she might become his wife. After exhausting all forms of enjoyment, and exercising all power which he desired, the term came to an end. Helen and her child vanished; a storm, with terrific thunder and lightning, came at midnight, and in the morning only a few fragments of Faust's body, torn and mangled by infernal claws, were found in the chamber. He had a famulus—a word used to signify a

servant and amanuensis—by name Chrostopher Wagner, who followed his example, made a compact with Satan, was served by an evil spirit in the shape of a monkey, and finally met the fate of his master.

Different Versions.

The belief in witchcraft survived among the people long after law and theology had discarded it, and a dramatized version of *Faust* was one of the favorite plays given in puppet theatres, at fairs or popular festivals. Goethe probably saw it thus acted, as a child, and when, after his return from Leipsic, he took up the study of alchemy, himself disgusted with the manner in which knowledge was imparted, we can easily understand how the legend must have returned to his mind. The various texts of the old puppet-plays are by no means mere doggrel; they show considerable dramatic power and suggest, to a lively imagination, much more than they express. Goethe was not the only one to whom the idea occurred, of making a graver use of the material. Lessing and Müller—the painter Müller—each wrote a tragedy of *Faust*, without being aware of Goethe's design; and one of the friends of the former, writing about the lost manuscript after his death, says that Lessing's *Faust* was written at a time when in every quarter of Germany a *Faust* was either published or announced. Then came *The Sorrows of Werther*, the history of which, the prodigious sensation that it produced and the nature of its influence as contrasted with the author's design, make it a phenomenon

in the annals of literature. The Storm and Stress period was then approaching its climax, and Goethe could not escape the infection. His powerful nature experienced every symptom of the disease in an aggravated form, and then healed itself. Although no poet ever made freer use of his own sensations and experiences—his joy, suffering, passion and aspiration—yet his habit was to wait until the experience had passed, then, holding it firmly apart from him to make it an intellectual study. He revives the tempest, and lets it rage around him but in the centre there is a belt of calm, where he sits and controls it. *Werther* is a psychological study of this character. Goethe combined his own experience with the tragical fate of a man whom he knew, and produced what is generally called a sentimental story, though really a remarkable dissection of a typical character. But it was not so received and understood. All Europe dissolved in a burst of emotion over its pages; it was hailed as the triumph and justification of the sentimental school, and a whole literature of imitations, parodies and criticisms followed it.

Goethe claims that his *Werther* was written in four weeks; but it is certain that the task of its composition, which always preceded the written narrative, occupied a much longer period. In the summer of 1773 we learn that the work was slowly dragging along, and it was not until September of the following year that the first printed copies were sent to two of his lady friends. In October it had spread all over Germany, and was soon translated or imitated in every language of Europe and criticised in every periodical with the fullest meed of

praise or scorn; for it was either enthusiastically admired or sternly condemned. Finally it made the round of the world and penetrated even to China. No German work of the eighteenth century, and perhaps none of any age or country has created such a sensation. The Werther fever wrung the hearts of men and women with imaginary sorrows; floods of tears were shed; young men dressed in blue coats and yellow breeches shot themselves with *Werther* in their hands. It opened the flood-gates of pent-up sentimentalism which had been stirred by the philosophy of the time, and which the calamities of the next generation were rudely to repress.

The first part of *Werther* had been inspired by the tragic end of a young man who had been one of Goethe's fellow-students at Leipsic. The second represents the agony of a jealous husband, as represented in the flesh by an Italian merchant, resident at Leipsic, whose wife Goethe loved with a brotherly love. The attachment appears to have been innocent enough, but was not so regarded by the husband, whose ideas, says Merck, one of the Weimar circle and a close friend of Goethe's, did not extend much beyond his business. It was dispiriting, continues Merck, for the poet to have to seek his girl friend among barrels of herrings and piles of cheese; but "he consoles her much for the smell of oil and cheese, and for her husband's manners." How Goethe found his inspiration amid such environment is not explained; but, as we shall see, he had a strong practical side to his nature.

On his *Götz* and *Werther* rests the solid foundation

of Goethe's fame, though much was yet to be added to the superstructure. That he should have written two works so entirely different in matter and style is of itself one of the strongest proofs of genius. *Werther* represents the languid sentimentalism, the passionate despair, that possessed an age vexed by evils for which there was no cure, tortured by the presence of a high ideal which revealed to it at once the depth of its misery and the hopelessness of a better lot. *Götz* was the first manly appeal to the chivalry of German spirit, which, caught up by other voices, sounded throughout the fatherland like the call of a warder's trumpet, till it produced a national courage founded on the recollection of an illustrious past, which overthrew the might of the conqueror at the moment when he seemed about to dominate the earth. *Werther* is an echo of Rousseau, the lamentation of a suffering world; *Götz* is the prototype of Stein, the corner-stone of a renovated empire; in its short, sharp dialogue, it recalls the pregnant terseness of mediæval German. *Werther*, as soft and melodious as Plato, was the first revelation of that marvellous style which, in the hands of a master, compels a language as rich as the Greek to be also as musical.

Life at Weimar.

While we cannot divide the literary life of Goethe into periods, like that of Schiller, because his growth was not only steady and symmetrical, but some of his faculties were nearly perfect at the start, yet there are occasional pauses in his activity and variations in its

character. Soon after the publication of *Werther* occurred the one important change in his external life. In September, 1775, the duke Karl August invited Goethe to visit him at Weimar, and the visit was followed by the offer of a permanent situation at the court, with the title of privy councillor and a salary of twelve hundred thalers a year. In spite of his father's opposition, Goethe accepted, and henceforth Weimar was his home. The appointment of an untitled poet to a place which tradition required to be filled by a noble, was a great scandal throughout Germany.

Soon afterward Weimar became the literary centre of Germany. The court was presided over by the duchess Amalia, the grand-duke's mother, who at the age of nineteen had been left a widow with two sons. She was a great lover of the stage, and the best playwriters of Germany made their headquarters at Weimar until it was burned down in 1774, together with the royal palace. After the marriage of her eldest son, Karl August, she lived in one of the simple country-houses which surround the capital, and contented herself with amateur theatricals. The duke, who was then only eighteen years of age, was simple in his tastes, impatient of etiquette and restraint, true, honest and steadfast; fond of novelty and excitement, and of great courage and activity. His impulses, rarely checked, led him rather to chivalrous enterprise than to injurious excesses.

Upon this society Goethe, in the strength and beauty of youth, rose like a star. From the moment of his arrival he became the inseparable and indispensable

companion of the duke. He subdued the affections of all he met with, and Wieland declared that his soul was as full of him as a dewdrop of the morning sun; that, take him all in all, he was the greatest, best and most noble being that God had ever created. The first months at Weimar were passed in a round of pleasure, and Goethe was treated as a guest. In the autumn, journeys, rides, shooting-parties; in the winter, balls, masquerades, skating-parties by torchlight, dancing at peasants' feasts, filled up their time. The wild, grotesque life led by the poet and the duke gave much offense. Their chief object seemed to be to violate all the sacred conventionalities of German courts. They appeared in society in top-boots, cracked whips together in the market-place, plunged into the river Ilm at midnight, and conducted themselves altogether more like a couple of students on a frolic than a pair of dignified personages. Evil reports flew about Germany; the court at Weimar had a bad name; Klopstock wrote letters of solemn advice, and forbade his young friend Stolberg to accept an appointment which the duke had offered him. Goethe wrote in reply that, if Stolberg came, he would find them no worse, and perhaps even better, than he had known them before. We may be sure that no decencies were disregarded, except the word be applied to the artificial restrictions of courtly etiquette. Goethe and the duke dined together and bathed together; the duke addressed his friend by the familiar "thou;" Goethe slept in his chamber and tended him when he was ill. In the following spring the duke gave him the little house and garden by the side of the Ilm, in

which he lived for the next eight years. By accepting his position as a privy councillor, Goethe had bound himself, as it were, to Weimar, and the tie was further strengthened by the promotions that came swiftly upon him, with emoluments to correspond; so that in 1816 his income was equivalent to $2,250 a year, with an allowance for carriage expenses. In return he devoted himself with interest and enthusiasm to the affairs of the duke, opening mines and otherwise developing the resources of his territory, including the reconstruction of his little army.

During these years Goethe's productiveness slackened, because there was no incitement, and the external impulse gave way, for a time, to his hearty delight in active physical life. It was his habit to carry a poetical conception for a long time in his brain, allowing it to develop by its own force until the proper mood and leisure for its delivery arrived; then it was put into words with a rapidity and artistic completion which astonished his friends, who did not guess how much of the labor had been silently performed in advance. Thus, while he seemed most indolent, the dramatic poems of *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, *Tasso*, and *Egmont*, were in progress, and portions of them were even written in prose. After three years of free, unrestrained companionship with the duke, Goethe began to weary of balls, haunts and picnics, and withdrew more and more from the society of the court. Though the intimacy was broken off, the duke was steadfast in his friendship, making Goethe a noble and appointing him president of the Chamber. The death of his father, about this time, having

made him comparatively wealthy, he now determined to carry out his long-cherished plan of a journey to Italy; but four years still intervened before he succeeded in leaving Weimar. During this time he began to write his philosophical romance of *Wilhelm Meister*, which was not published until long afterward.

Journey to Italy.

At last, in 1786, secretly and under an assumed name, Goethe set forth for Italy, where he remained for nearly two years, which appear to have been a season of pure and perfect enjoyment. In the strictest incognito he journeyed by way of Munich, where he studied the picture gallery and the collection of antiquities; by the lake of Garda, where he began his metrical version of *Iphigenie;* by Verona, where, in its stupendous amphitheatre, he saw the first specimen of Roman architecture; by Vicenza, where he was attracted by the grace and harmony of the classic Palladio; by Padua, where he admired the frescoes of Giotto; to Venice, where for the first time he was able to taste the charm and richness of southern life. As he proceeded further, Ferrara spoke to him of Tasso; Bologna showed him the great masters of the academic school; Florence interested him in many things; Assisi drew his attention, not to the triple church of St. Francis, with its unrivalled museum of religious art, but to the little ruined temple which no modern traveller would notice, but for the name of Goethe. During his first stay in Rome, the constant companion of his studies was the painter Tisch-

IPHIGENIA

After an original painting by E. Charlemont

Oh, gaze not so.
'Twas such such looks that Clytemnestra sought
An entrance to her son Orestes' heart,
And yet his upraised arm kept bosom off.

IPHIGENIA IN TAURIS.—GOETHE.

bein, who helped him to disentangle the many difficulties of the old and new quarters of the eternal city. Though Goethe soon renounced his ambition as an artist, he tried almost every branch—drawing in pencil, etching, painting in oil, and engraving on copper and wood. His failure was due mainly to want of time.

Iphigenie.

Goethe lived chiefly among the German artists and men of letters who frequented the Café Greco. Among these were Angelica Kaufmann and Moritz, who deepened his knowledge of versification and prepared him for the composition of *Iphigenie*, the first important fruit of the Italian journey. It is in very strong contrast with *Götz von Berlichingen*, for it is written in the strictest classical form. Although based on the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, of Euripides, it has little in common with it. In Euripides Thoas is represented as a cruel barbarian, against whom it is justifiable to employ every artifice of fraud or violence. In Goethe the characters are ennobled by a higher principle, and the struggle between truth and falsehood is made a prominent motive of the piece. When Thoas discovers that, according to the oracle of Apollo, the return of Orestes' sister to Greece will satisfy the anger of the gods, he gives his consent, and his last words are a friendly farewell. Though acted before the court at Weimar, Goethe taking the part of Orestes, and the duke that of Pylades, it is not suited for the stage and is rather a dramatic poem than a drama, but with such grandeur inherent in

the lines that the reader seems to breathe the purest ether of poetry.

Tasso.

Early in 1787 Goethe left Rome for Naples. Here he was attracted less by the remains of antiquity, even the new revelations of Herculaneum and Pompeii, than by the magnificence of the prospects, the bay, the island, the volcano, the thousand beauties which make the gulf unrivalled in natural scenery, together with the multitudinous and teeming life which throngs the endless quays that line the shore. Sorrento stimulated him to a revisal of his *Torquato Tasso*, but he did not complete the drama till his return from Italy, and it did not appear in print till the spring of 1790. The play had a certain fascination for him, as a picture of his own distracted life. He could depict with feeling the struggle between the actual and the ideal, the ill-assortment of a passionate poet with the jealous and artificial environment of a court. Though almost without action, and little more than a psychological study, it abounds in fine passages; but it is a poem which will never be appreciated, except by poets. At the end of March Goethe sailed to Sicily, passing the voyage rolled up in his cloak and meditating on the composition of his *Tasso*. Sicily struck him, as it must strike all travellers who have studied the ancient world, as a revelation of Greece. It is, if one may say so, more Greek than Greece itself. Its mountains, streams, trees, flowers, the form of its boats and pottery, the habits of the people, the quivering smile of the blue seas fringed with

golden sands, represent completely the Greece of the *Odyssey* and of the choruses of Euripides. Goethe was overmastered by this powerful influence. He practiced drawing, for which, however, he had little talent, and began his *Nausicaa*, the story of the Odyssey in dramatic form, which always remained a fragment.

Goethe returned to Rome early in the summer, and the rest of the year was spent in the city and its neighborhood, in serious study, and in the composition of *Egmont*, a work begun with the approval of his father in the early Frankfort days. Although it still keeps the stage, and is more frequently acted than any other of his dramas, *Egmont* has very grave faults. It is an unfortunate mixture of the natural and ideal treatment, and the license with which the scenes are transposed in modern performances shows how much the work lacks symmetry and cohesion. Schiller criticised it severely as being untrue to history, and especially the close, where all difficulties are solved by the appearance of a deus ex machina. The music of Beethoven contributed largely toward its success. Besides this, Goethe rewrote for publication his early vaudevilles of *Erwin and Elmire* and *Claudine von Villa Bella*. The carnival of 1788 was a valuable experience, suggesting some scenes of *Faust*, especially the one in the witches' kitchen, which was composed in the Borghese gardens. Soon afterward Goethe took a sad farewell of Italy, returning to Weimar with a feeling of regret which made him unhappy for many months.

From this time his life takes a new color. He had learned in Italy not only new principles of art—not

only that a work of art, whatever of Gothic ornament it may possess, must be solid, firm and simple in its construction as a Grecian temple—but he had also learned that life itself should be a work of art. He was determined henceforth to be himself, to break the bonds which had confined him and the distractions which had confused him, to possess his soul sacred and inviolable for the purpose of his life. He was relieved of the presidency of the chamber and of the war commission, but in a manner which did him the greatest honor. For several years he had been involved in a harmless, though dangerous entanglement with Frau von Stein, a married lady of the court, and of this he determined to rid himself.

Goethe's Love Affairs.

Goethe gave to woman a full share in the shaping of his career, and to some women a very liberal share. From boyhood he was never without a passion, and if we may believe his autobiography he experienced his first love about the age of fifteen, in the person of Gretchen, who is supposed to have been the daughter of an Offenbach innkeeper. He worshipped her as Dante worshipped Beatrice; but she treated him as a child, very much as Mary Chaworth treated Byron. There is, however, no other evidence of this first love, and it would be quite in accordance with Goethe's manner to enlarge on a very small foundation. His letters also speak of a boyish attachment to one Charitas Meixner, a friend of his sister and the daughter of a wealthy merchant of Worms. He expresses his affection for her with all

the fervor of French phraseology; but if she returned it, she soon found "metal more attractive," for she married a rich burgher of her native town.

At Leipsic his choice was Kitty Schönkopf, the Ænnchen of his autobiography. She often teased him with her inconstant ways, and to this experience is due his drama, *Lovers' Quarrels*, as it may be styled. It is a mere trifle, a pastoral in one act, and its only interest is as an episode from the author's life. A deeper chord is struck in the play of the *Fellow Sinners*, which forms a forbidding picture of the time and of the doings of the youth who wrote it. The daughter of an innkeeper has made an unhappy marriage, and is visited by a former lover, who is in good circumstances. An assignation is arranged, and the interview it witnessed by the husband, who has come to steal the stranger's purse. The father, who comes in to read one of the lover's letters, is surprised and, with his daughter, accused of the theft. The real culprit is discovered, and defends himself by accusing the stranger of his conduct to his wife. Goethe also wrote at Leipsic a number of erotic songs, set to music. Moral-sensuous, he calls them; but they are certainly more sensuous than moral. They have, however, the merit of a musical and easy flow of expression, with varying moods of passion, described with remarkable elegance.

During Goethe's stay in Strasburg he conceived what he imagined to be an imperishable affection for Frederike, the daughter of a village parson, a simple and worthy man, suggesting to the poet, fresh from the study of Goldsmith, the *Vicar of Wakefield*. Frederike

was but sixteen years of age, tall and slight, with fair hair and blue eyes, and she seems to have fallen headlong in love with Goethe, who was then only twenty-one. He addressed a number of songs to her, ten of which are found in the collection of his works. He devoted to her much of the time which he should have given to his studies, and in the winter neither storm nor cold nor darkness could keep him from riding over to the village, though twenty miles away. In spring there were picnics, water-parties, games and dances, which filled up the swiftly-flying weeks. But when, after taking his degree, the time approached for leaving Strasburg, he felt that his love was merely a dream, that it could have no serious termination. Frederike endeavored to treat the matter in the same light, and it was only in her letters that she afterward betrayed the depth and reality of her passion.

Passing by other attachments, we come to his life-long devotion to Charlotte von Stein, a lady of the court at Weimar, wife of the master of the horse, thirty-three years of age and the mother of seven children. With all these drawbacks, Goethe's affection was undoubtedly sincere, and at the same time perfectly innocent. His letters to her extend over a period of fifty years; he called her by the most endearing epithets; and for years he made her acquainted with his every action and almost with his every thought. Most of his writings at this time were for the dramatic entertainment of the court, including a series of masks or ballets for the birthday of the grand-duchess Louise, two melodramas and several operettas. But his relations with

Frau von Stein, though harmless, became every year more full of danger, and it was partly to escape from this influence that Goethe undertook his journey to Italy.

While wandering aimlessly in one of the parks near Rome, Goethe was accosted by a young girl, named Christiane Vulpius, who presented him with a petition in favor of her brother. She was a comely damsel, with golden curling locks, rosy cheeks, laughing eyes and a neatly rounded figure. The poet took her to his home, and she became his wife in conscience and the mother of his children, though he did not marry her until 1806, when the terrors of the French occupation made him anxious for his eldest son. She had little education, and he could not take her into society; but she was a good and loving wife, and her quick mother-wit fitted her for an intellectual companion. To these days of his early wedded life belong the Roman elegies, which, though Italian in form, in color and in sensuality, were written in German from home experiences.

Director of the Weimar Theatre.

In the spring of 1790 we again find Goethe in Italy, where he met the duchess Amalia at Venice, and the literary fruit of the journey was the Venetian epigrams, which are still more sensuous than the Roman. In the autumn of the following year he devoted himself to a task in which he had before been informally engaged at Weimar. The new theatre was completed and Goethe was appointed director. It was in this capacity

that he was best known to the citizens; for he had the final decision on every detail, whether of subject, scenery or acting, and in later years a large arm-chair was reserved for him in the middle of the pit, applause being hardly permitted until he gave the signal for it. The German stage owes almost as much to Goethe as to Lessing; for the répertoire of the Weimar and other theatres was stocked with pieces of solid merit, which long held their place. Shakespeare was performed no longer in burlesque, but in serious renditions of his plays, and the actors were instructed in the delivery of blank verse. Stress was laid on the excellence of the ensemble as against the predominance of particular stars, and the theatre was considered as a school not only of wholesome entertainment but of national culture. Among the pieces which Goethe wrote at this time was the *Gross Cophta*, founded on the history of Cagliostro and the diamond necklace. He appears to have been fascinated by the story as a foreboding of the coming horrors of the Revolution.

When Goethe returned from Italy he found himself far less popular than he had been after the publication of his *Werther*. The author's genius was felt everywhere, but it disturbed to a greater extent than it gave delight. He stood almost alone. Klopstock was unfriendly, Herder was jealous and sensitive. Schiller was still shy and doubtful, and Wieland, who never was other than a large-hearted friend, could give him no satisfactory support. Although, fifteen years before, the nerves of all Europe had been thrilled by his *Werther*, and his name was as well known as that of Rousseau

or Voltaire, yet, when the collected edition of his works was published in Leipsic, in 1790, containing *Götz*, *Iphigenie*, *Tasso*, *Egmont*, much of the first part of *Faust*, and his exquisite songs and lyrics, the publishers complained that the sale was not sufficient to pay expenses. Those whom he had offended, or who were jealous of his position or fortune, now formed quite a large class, including many authors in the flush of a transient popularity. He never betrayed his feelings in such matters, but it is evident that his devotion to science for some years was partly the consequence of discouragement in regard to his literary work.

Intercourse with Schiller.

In 1794, nearly six years after Goethe's first interview with Schiller, the two came together again, this time only to be separated by death, and here was the most powerful influence which had thus far affected the lives of the two poets; for the closeness of the intimacy is almost without a parallel in literary history. Schiller, though not yet at the height of his reputation, had written many of the works which have made him famous, when he settled at Weimar in 1787. But he found the place deserted, Goethe being in Italy and the duke in the Prussian camp. It was chiefly on the recommendation of the former that he was appointed professor of history in the university of Jena, and this office he accepted somewhat reluctantly, fearful, as he says, lest the scholars should discover that they knew more history than the teacher. Soon afterward he

married, and set to work on his *History of the Thirty Years' War*, contributing also, as did Goethe, after his return, to Cotta's new literary journal, the *Horen*.

It was not long before the close intimacy with a spirit as restlessly creative as his own began to show itself in Goethe's return to poetry. Having now the aid of Schiller's intelligent criticism, he completed his *Wilhelm Meister*, the plan of which he had conceived twenty years before, adding two more to the six books written before the Italian tour. The entire work, which has been admirably translated by Carlyle, is in the nature of a philosophical romance, and stands in the very first rank of Goethe's writings. His aim was to attain perfect objectivity of tone, to represent men as they are and to pass no judgment upon them. It is a singular compound of pictures of life, so plain and realistic that they sometimes become actually coarse, with theories of society, labor and education so refined that they frequently lose all practical character. The hero passes with weak irresolution through a number of ordinary circumstances, apparently the sport of fortune and the plaything of chance; yet all these experiences have their definite result in the training of his character. Like the son of Kish, he goes forth to seek his father's asses and finds a kingdom. The unearthly charm of the child Mignon, the dark fate which surrounds the aged harper, like the doom of Œdipus, the uncertain yearning after a happier home in brighter climes gives a deeper undertone to the prevailing lightness of the story. The faults of the story are as positive as its beauties; but it has no antetype in literature. The style is

exquisitely soft and flowing, with all the sweetness and simplicity of *Werther*, but more mellow and mature. In the sixth book is a piece of the autobiography of Fräulein von Klettenberg, altered to suit its new environment. It was of her that Goethe wrote: "My Klettenberg is dead! She who was so much to me."

The period of Goethe's closest intimacy with Schiller, though the two were in daily coöperation, left but little of permanent worth from the former poet. On the other hand these are the years of Schiller's greatest activity. It was at this time that he produced his *Wallenstein* trilogy, probably his grandest effort, followed by *Marie Stuart, Jungfrau von Orleans, Braut von Messina* and *Wilhelm Tell.* In 1799 a dramatic school was established at Weimar, and these classical dramas were the glory of its stage. Of a proposed epic, whose theme was Achilles, Goethe completed only the first canto, and it had no successor. He then devoted himself to the works of others, translating and preparing the *Mahomet* and *Tancred* of Voltaire for the Leipsic theatre. After recovering from a dangerous illness, he sketched the outline of a trilogy dealing with the French Revolution; but of this only the first part, the *Natürliche Tochter*, was completed. The story is a true one of a princess of the French house of Conti. The play is written with the full beauty of Goethe's style, and some passages and effects are worthy of his highest genius; but, as a whole, it is a failure. It has the quality so characteristic of Goethe's later work, of too great universality of treatment—a serious drawback in a drama. The characters are not living beings but ab-

stractions, and the language is vague and general, rather than clear and defined.

Goethe's Celebrity.

At the close of 1803 Madame de Staël arrived in Weimar, accompanied by Benjamin Constant. She had, of course, heard of Goethe's fame, and was desirous of presenting him to the world as a proof of the intellectual superiority of Germany. But the poet fled from her, as did Byron at a later period, hiding in Jena until summoned by order of the duke. Of the conversations which followed in the salons of Weimar the great Frenchwoman has given some account in her work *De l'Allemagne.* Goethe was at this time the greatest man in Europe, with the exception only of Napoleon, and was the oracle to whom all the most distinguished men in Germany turned for consultation or advice. He was intimate with Wilhelm von Humboldt, the statesman and scholar; with Wolf, the founder of the science of philology; with Zetter, the musician, and with Gottfried Hermann the leading authority on Greek metres. But the friendship which he prized more than all the rest was now about to be severed.

Death of Schiller.

In the beginning of 1805 Goethe had a foreboding that either he or Schiller would die in that year, and it proved to be only too true. In January they were both prostrate with a serious illness, and Schiller, re-

covering first, visited his friend in the sick-room, where he displayed the most intense emotion. On the 29th of April they saw each other for the last time. Schiller was on his way to the theatre, whither Goethe was still too weak to accompany him, and they parted at the door of Schiller's house. On the 9th of May Schiller died, and no one dared tell Goethe the news, though he saw from the faces of those around him that something was amiss. On the morrow, when his wife entered the room, he asked: "Is it not true that Schiller was very ill yesterday?" She began to sob, and he then cried, "He is dead!" "Thou hast spoken it thyself," she answered. Again exclaiming "He is dead!" and turning aside, he covered his weeping eyes with his hands. Schiller and Goethe have ever been inseparable in the minds of their countrymen, and have reigned as twin stars in the literary firmament. If Schiller does not hold the first place he is the more beloved, though Goethe is more admired.

Marriage.

After Schiller's death Goethe lost for a time his interest in literature. Within a year and a half the battle of Jena was fought, and Weimar was sacked by the French army. It was probably the insecurity of life at this time which led him to marry the mother of his son, with whom he had been living for seventeen years —or rather, should we say, the sense of insecurity led her to consent to the marriage, which she had before refused. Nothing in Goethe's life has been so misunderstood and misrepresented as his relations with Chris-

tiane Vulpius. She was always treated as a wife, and very much better than most wives, the two being united by bonds more indissoluble than those of the church. Christiane was from a much lower rank in society; but she understood Goethe's nature as no one else did.

Hermann and Dorothea.

Among the correspondence of the publisher Vieweg, of Brunswick, a letter of Goethe's was recently found, consisting of these two sentences: "If you are willing to publish the contents of the accompanying sealed package, send me 200 ducats (about $800). If you decline, return the package with seals unbroken." This was a hard condition for the publisher; he deliberated a day or two, then sent the 200 ducats, and opened the package. It contained the pastoral epic of *Hermann und Dorothea*, one of Goethe's most perfect works. We happen to know, through his correspondence with Schiller and others, the manner in which it was written. Goethe had finished his canto of the *Achilleis*, which we can only call an imitation of Homer, and was encouraged by Schiller to write the drama of *Nausicaa*, founded on the *Odyssey*. But the work dragged; by a sudden revulsion of feeling Goethe turned to the life of his own day, took up a subject which had been waiting six or seven years in his brain, planned and arranged it during his official journeys through the duchy, and then wrote it in the course of a few weeks of summer leisure. We have his own word for the statement that more than half of it was written in nine consecutive days. It was

one of his most fortunate inspirations. The publisher was lucky in his venture, for the poem not only revived Goethe's popularity but gave to the literary circles of Germany their first true impression of his real power. *Hermann und Dorothea* is the simplest possible idyl of common life, representing the sufferings of the Lutherans driven out by the archbishop of Salzburg in the early part of the eighteenth century. Goethe had also been an eye-witness of the woes produced by the French Revolution, and he made the poem a reflection, in a minor degree, of the storms and convulsions of the great world. In none of his works did he so fully evince the power of saturating the commonest scenes and events with the subtle elements of poetry, and it was to this that he turned with most satisfaction in his old age.

Interview With Napoleon.

At the sack of Weimar, where many of Goethe's friends lost everything they possessed, his property and perhaps his life were saved by the firmness of Christiane, and afterward by the billeting of Marshal Augureau in his house. On the day after Jena Napoleon entered the town, but, though one of his greatest admirers, Goethe did not meet him until the congress of Erfurt, where the sovereigns and princes of Europe were assembled in 1808. He was attracted at least as much by the prospect of seeing Talma as of meeting Napoleon. When invited to an audience, Talleyrand, Berthier and Savary were present, and the emperor was seated at a large round table eating his breakfast. He

beckoned Goethe to approach him, and said to him, "Vous êtes un homme." He asked how old he was, expressed his wonder at the freshness of his appearance, said that he had read *Werther* through seven times, and made some acute remarks on the management of the plot. Then, after an interruption, he declared that tragedy ought to be the school of kings and peoples, and that there was no worthier subject than the death of Cæsar, which Voltaire had treated insufficiently. A great poet would have given prominence to Cæsar's plans for the regeneration of the world, and shown what a loss mankind had suffered by his assassination. He invited Goethe to Paris, where he would find subjects worthy of his skill. They parted with mutual admiration, and the bust of Napoleon was always a prominent ornament in Goethe's study.

Evolution of Faust.

In the same year an edition of Goethe's works in thirteen volumes was published by Cotta at Tübingen, which is remarkable as containing the first part of *Faust* in its complete form; for the drama had only been published as a fragment in the edition of 1790. It had then attracted but little attention. Heyne wrote: "There are fine things in it, but with them there are such things as only he could give to the world who takes other men to be blockheads." Wieland and Schiller were apparently dissatisfied with it; for it had the appearance of patchwork, made up of passages which had been written at very different periods of his life. The

idea of writing *Faust* seems to have come to Goethe in his earliest manhood. He was brooding over it at the time when he wrote *Götz von Berlichingen*, but at Strasburg he spoke to Herder of neither. He apparently began to write portions of it at the same time as his *Werther*, which was in 1774, and we find mention of its progress in the two following years; indeed, all the important parts of the fragment which appeared in 1790 were known to Jacobi before 1776. He took the work with him to Italy, where he added little except the scene in the witches' kitchen. The dedication, the Prologue in Heaven, which presents to the reader the idea of the whole work, the Prelude on the Stage copied from the Indian drama, the lyrical intermezzo, the scene with Wagner before the city gate, and the scene with Mephistopheles in the study were written before 1800. In that year he was busy with Helena for the second part, and he added nothing afterward to the first except the *Walpurgis Night* and the scene of Valentine's death.

Writing of *Faust* in his eightieth year, Goethe says with truth: "The commendation which the poem has received far and near may be, perhaps, owing to this quality, that it permanently preserves the period of development of a human soul which is tormented by all that afflicts mankind, shaken also by all that disturbs it, repelled by all that it finds repellent, and made happy by all that it desires. The author is at present far removed from such conditions; the world likewise has some other struggles to undergo to an extent; nevertheless the state of man, in joy and sorrow, remains very much the same,

and the latest born will still find cause to acquaint himself with what has been enjoyed and suffered before him in order to adapt himself to that which awaits him."

The Elective Affinities.

Goethe's first important work, after the death of Schiller, was a novel whose unutterable German title—*Wahlverwandtschaften*—has been translated *The Elective Affinities*, a story often cited to prove the immoral tendency of his works. A married couple, Edward and Charlotte, are thrown into constant companionship with two unmarried persons, the captain and Ottilie. A cross attraction takes place similar to that which is often seen in chemical experiments. Edward unites himself with Ottilie, Charlotte with the captain. The psychological changes by which this result is produced are portrayed with a masterly hand. The moral may be held by some to exalt the preponderance of fatality in human affairs, and the uselessness of contending against irresistible circumstances. Others may believe that the tale is intended to show the disastrous calamities which may be wrought by a weak and self-indulgent will. Ottilie, though she cannot resist her passion, has strength enough to starve herself to death.

The year 1809, in which *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* was written, was for Goethe the beginning of a new era. He was then fresher and brighter than he had been for ten years before. He had lived through a troubled period of oppressive sorrow. The death of Schiller, the violation of his beloved Weimar, the deaths of the duchess

Amalia and of his mother, his own bodily and mental sufferings, had given a tone of sadness to his poetry. As if to put the finishing stroke to the efforts of his life, he had married the mother of his children and arranged and published his collected works.

Autobiography.

It was natural that at the beginning of a new course of life Goethe should write an account of his past existence. The study of his collected poems also made it apparent to him how necessary it was to furnish a key by which they might be understood. These and other causes led to the composition of *Poetry and Truth*, an autobiographical history of the poet's life from his birth till his settlement at Weimar. This work has been a cause of much embarrassment to the poet's biographers; for where it ought to be the most trustworthy source of information it is most misleading. It is probable that Goethe intended it to be an accurate and circumstantial account of his career. But the inner life of the individual is more clear to him than the outer; the stages of our self-development are better remembered than the exact circumstances which produced them or the order of time in which they followed each other. Goethe took pains to ascertain facts which he had forgotten; but he was so conscious that imagination would play a large part in the composition that in the title he gave poetry the precedence before truth. The indefatigable industry of German investigation has laid open to us every detail of the poet's life and every phase of his feeling.

Poetry and Truth, if it has lost its rank as a history, still keeps its place as a classic; the simple, loving delineation of the childhood of genius is as fresh as ever, and is of more universal interest from being less particular. The first five books of this autobiography appeared in 1811, the next five in 1812, the third instalment at Easter, 1814, and the conclusion after Goethe's death.

The period through which *Poetry and Truth* was Goethe's principal work witnessed the greatest political events of the first half of the nineteenth century, including the rising of the German people against the oppression of Napoleon. In this Goethe took no share, and with it he apparently felt little sympathy. He made no impassioned orations to his countrymen like Fichte; he wrote no inspiring lays like Körner. He saw Stein and Arndt at Dresden in 1813, but disappointed them by his impassive manner, saying to Körner's father at the same time: "Yes, shake your chains. The man is too great for you. You will not break them, but only drive them deeper into your flesh." The reasons for this apparent coldness are perhaps more simple than they appear at first sight. Goethe was a man of thought rather than of action. Although a fair portion of his long life was given to practical business, his heart was always in speculation or artistic production. While inspecting mines he was spinning theories of geological formation; while working for the war commission he gladly ran away to the castle of Dornburg, to bury himself among his deserted papers. The pressure of the court business at Weimar drove him to the solitude of Italy. In the defiles of the Argonne, and in the trenches

before Mainz, where he had fought under the duke of Weimar, he was scheming and arranging his colors. A bombardment was valued by him less as an attack upon an enemy than as a series of interesting experiments in optics. Added to this natural indifference to the details of human affairs was his belief in the predominance of force, and in the necessary evolution of the history of the world. Napoleon was to him the greatest living depository of power. Nations, whether conquered or victorious, separated or united, obeyed a common law, against which individuals will strive in vain. Goethe was thus incapacitated for politics, both by his qualities and his defects, and this habit of abstract contemplation grew upon him in later life. Those who condemn him on this ground should remember that he hailed in no grudging spirit the formation of a united Germany, and that his works have been one of the most potent factors in making all Germans feel that they are one.

The Divan.

It was hardly to be expected that at the age of sixty-five Goethe should strike out new lines of poetical activity. However, in the *West-östliche Divan* he made the first attempt to transplant Eastern poetry to a German soil, and set an example which has been followed by Heine and Mirza Schaffy. In 1811 he first became acquainted with the works of Hafiz in Hammer's translation. At a time when North and South and West were splitting asunder, when thrones were breaking up and empires trembling, he sought a willing refuge in

the restoring fountain of the Eastern poet. His *Timur* has an obvious reference to the expedition of Napoleon in Russia, but the large majority of the poems are amatory, and are addressed to an imaginary Suleika, whose name is given to one of the books. She was Marianne von Willemer, an old friend of Goethe's and of his brother-in-law, Schlosser. The correspondence between them, which was first published in 1877, extends almost to the day of his death, and includes letters from Eckermann giving an account of his last moments. Not only were most of the *Divan* poems addressed to Suleika, but several of those included in the collection are by Marianne herself, and will even bear comparison with those of Goethe. In these poems the Oriental form is not very well observed. Their Eastern color depends chiefly on the suggestion of Eastern scenery and the introduction of Eastern names, thus permitting a greater tendency to levity, to fatalism and to passion that would have been possible in poems of a purely German character.

In the two or three hundred short poems contained in the *Divan* the fire of a second youth seems to glow and throb through the wisdom of age; for some of the most beautiful brief lyrics that Goethe ever wrote are found in the collection. It was from this source that Count Platen and Rüchert drew their Oriental inspiration. The impression it produced was so strong that it almost created a new fashion in literature. By this time Goethe had outlived the jealousy and enmity which had so long assailed him. Kotzebue was powerless; Novalis and Nicolai were dead; Schlegel was silent; the Stolbergs

were forgotten; and a new generation had grown up, to whom the poet was an acknowledged power. The race was not yet sufficiently developed to appreciate his best work, but they could reverence without reaching that point. He had also withdrawn from official duties. His time was his own; society came to him at his own convenience, and his life henceforth was quiet, serene, yet still unweariedly active.

Last Years.

The last twelve years of Goethe's life, when he had passed his seventieth year, were occupied by his criticisms on the literature of foreign countries, by the *Wanderjahre* and the second part of *Faust*. He was now the literary dictator of Germany and Europe. He took but little interest in the direction in which the younger German school was moving, and was driven to turn his eyes abroad. He conceived an intense admiration for Byron, which was increased by his early death, introducing him as Euphorion in the second part of *Faust*. He also recognized the greatness of Scott, and was one of the first to send a greeting to the Italian, Mazzini. He conceived the idea of a world literature transcending the narrow limits of race and country, which should unite all nations in harmony of feeling and aspiration. German writers claim that his design has been realized, and that the literature of every age and country can be studied in a tongue which Goethe had made rich, flexible and serviceable for the purpose.

The *Wanderjahre*, although it contains some of

Goethe's most beautiful conceptions, the flight into Egypt, the description of the Pedagogic Province, the parable of the Three Reverences, is yet an ill-assorted collection of all kinds of writings, old and new. Its author never succeeded in giving it form or coherence, and his later style, beautiful as it is, becomes in these years vague and abstract. Still without this work we should not be acquainted with the full richness and power of his mind.

Second Part of Faust.

The second part of *Faust* has been a battlefield of controversy since its publication. For a long time it was regarded as impossible to understand, and as not worth understanding—the production of a great artist whose faculties had been impaired by age. By degrees it has, by careful labor, become intelligible to us, and the conviction is growing that it is the deepest and most important work of the author's life. Its composition cannot be called an after-thought; for there is no doubt that the poet finished at the age of eighty the plan which he had conceived sixty years before. The parallelism between the two dramas is not perfect, but it reveals itself more and more clearly to a patient study. Some points of this similarity have been well expressed by Rosenkranz, as quoted by Bayard Taylor: "Both parts are symmetrical in their structure. The first moves with deliberate swiftness from Heaven through the world to Hell; the second returns therefrom through the world to Heaven. Between the two lies the eman-

cipation of Faust from the torment of his conscious guilt, lies his Lethe, his assimilation of the past. In regard to substance, the first part begins religiously, becomes metaphysical and terminates ethically; the second part begins ethically, becomes æsthetic and terminates religiously. In one, love and knowledge are confronted with each other; in the other, practical activity and art, the ideal of the beautiful. In regard to form, the first part advances from the hymnal shout to monologue and dialogue; the second part from monologue and dialogue to the dithyrambic, closing with the hymn, which here glorifies not only the Lord and his uncomprehended lofty works, but the human in the process of its union with the divine, through redemption and atonement."

With the completion of *Faust* Goethe felt that the work of his life was accomplished. He still continued to work with regularity. He ordered and arranged his writings and labored at an autobiographical journal of his life. He bated not one jot of heart or hope, and took the liveliest interest in every movement of literature or science. When the news of the July revolution of 1830 reached Weimar, Goethe was excited beyond his wont, not on account of the triumph of liberal principles, but because the controversy between Cuvier and Geoffrey St. Hilaire had been decided in favor of the latter. Still he had much to darken his latter days. His old friends were falling fast around him. His wife had died in 1816, after a union of thirty years, and he felt her loss bitterly. The duchess Amalia had died eight years before, not long after the death of his mother. These and other bitter experiences he had now to under-

go when he was less able to bear them. Frau von Stein, with whom he had renewed his friendship, if not his love, died in January, 1827, and in June, 1828, he lost the companion of his youth, the grand-duke Karl August, who died suddenly, away from Weimar, on his return from a journey. Goethe received the news with outward calmness, but said forebodingly, "Now it is all over," and went to mourn and labor at the castle of Dornburg, where everything reminded him of the days of their early friendship. When Goethe died, none of the Weimar set were left except Knebel, who lived two years longer. A greater blow than any was the death of his only son, whom in spite of his moral weakness, his father deeply loved. He died at Rome in October, 1830, and was buried close by the pyramid of Caius Cestius, where Goethe himself once desired to be laid. We have a full account of the last nine years of Goethe's life from the writings of Eckermann, who became his secretary in 1823, lived with him till his death and noted down his conversations and his actions with the minuteness of a Boswell. Among other things he tells us that Goethe received only some $20,000 for the works of his entire life, though they yielded fortunes to his grandchildren. So little was the protection afforded to literature in Germany, during the lives of her greatest authors, that a complete and revised edition of his writings in forty volumes could only be secured against reprints by other publishers through a special act of the German diet. While the commentaries on Goethe's works are endless in number, in English-speaking countries the knowledge of them is largely due to the writ-

ings of Thomas Carlyle, while his life, written by G. H. Lewis, is as popular in Germany as in England.

Goethe's Appearance.

The end came slowly, like the sinking of the sun in a cloudless sky. Though left almost alone, Goethe still retained his intellectual vigor, his noble and strongly-marked features, cast as in a band of steel, and his erect and stately carriage. His bust, taken in Rome, is that of a man handsome as Apollo, and fourscore years, with all their sorrows and bereavements, could not bend his figure or dim the lustre of his dark brown eyes. The only difference was that Apollo had developed into the Olympian Jove. Rüchert, in a noble poem, wished for him the fate of the Persian poets, Saadi and Djami, who counted a full hundred years, but some part of the machinery had worn out, and a slight cause brought it to a stop.

Death.

On Friday, March 16th, 1832, Goethe awoke with a chill, from which he gradually recovered, and was so much better by Monday that he designed to begin his regular work on the following day. But in the middle of the night he woke up with a deathly coldness, which extended from his hands over his body, and which it took many hours to overcome. It then appeared that the lungs were attacked and that there was no possible hope of recovery. Goethe did not anticipate death. He sat fully clothed in his arm-chair, made attempts to

reach his study, spoke confidently of his recovery, and of the walks he would take in the fine April days. His daughter-in-law, Ottilie, tended him faithfully. On the morning of the 22d his strength gradually left him, and he sat slumbering in his arm-chair, holding Ottilie's hand. Her name was constantly on his lips, though his mind occasionally wandered, at one time to his beloved Schiller, at another to a fair female head, with black curls, some passion of his youth. His last words were an order to a servant to open another shutter to let in more light. After this he traced with his forefinger letters in the air. At half-past eleven in the forenoon he drew himself, without any sign of pain, into the left corner of his arm-chair, and went so peacefully to sleep that it was long before the watchers knew that his spirit was fled. He was buried in the grand-ducal vault, where the bones of Schiller were laid, and where Duke Karl August had directed his body to be placed, though the request was disregarded as contrary to the etiquette of German courts.

Goethe's Qualities.

Comparing Goethe with the two greatest poets who preceded him—Homer and Shakespeare—it may first be said that intellectually he was as far removed from either as each is from the other. Homer was essentially epic; Shakespeare essentially dramatic; in Goethe we find the highest equal development of all the powers of the human mind. The word "many-sided," which the Germans apply to him, is not an adequate expression. The general belief among men seems to be that achieve-

ment is the result of concentrated effort in one direction. Goethe reversed this rule; the broader his field of action became, the more splendid was his achievement. One cause of this phenomenon will be found in a quality which formed the very basis of his nature. He was never satisfied until he had ascertained the positive reality of the subject of his thought, and its relations to other realities. His fancy and his imagination were so healthy and so proportioned to his perceptive faculties that their activity was only exercised upon a basis of real form or fact. Those vague yet splendid moods of the mind, in which some poets indulge, were never known to him—or, if he knew them, he never gave them expression. With the Swedish Tegner he believed that

> The obscurely uttered is the obscurely thought.

We find the same realistic element in other poets, but never in such perfect combination with the highest qualities of the imagination. Edgar Allen Poe thus addresses Science—

> True daughter of Old Time thou art,
> Who changed all things with thy peering eyes!
> Why prey'st thou thus upon the poet's heart,
> Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?

And this is a sort of conventional sentiment with all minor poets. Even Schiller, at one period of his life, lamented, in exquisite verse, the dethronement of the Ideal by the Actual in life. Goethe, however, would have smiled, and answered in terms like these: "Science

is truth and Poetry is truth; both are infinite and inexhaustible; both are kindred fields through which the human approaches the divine mind, and they can never be antagonistic in a healthy nature. Poetry is not an exotic plant, brought down to our life from some warmer regions, and to be kept alive with artificial heat; it springs from and clothes all human life with color and sweetness, as grass and daisies cover the whole earth." Goethe could have analyzed the earth in which the rose is planted, and prepared a mathematical table of its ingredients; he could then have dissected the rose as a botanist, showing the metamorphoses by which the stem becomes the leaf and the leaf the blossom; and finally letting Science rest, while Fancy arose, fresh for the task, he could embalm the beauty and sentiment of the rose in immortal verse.

Goethe and Shakespeare.

This might also be called one of the undeveloped qualities of Shakespeare. The point wherein the two poets touch is their power of assimilating all their acquired knowledge, and using it in the service of poetry. Neither is afraid of descending to the commonest and coarsest realism; yet either can soar as lightly as a lark into the highest and purest spiritual atmosphere. Both claimed the largest liberty, and used it as a right. They walked over the earth as if bareheaded and barehanded, taking the brand of the sun, the dust of the highways and the beating of the storm upon their brows—in the strongest contrast to those minds which always seem to

go abroad in white kid gloves and patent-leather boots, with an umbrella for the sun and a mackintosh for the rain.

There is another sense which Shakespeare possessed by nature, but could only develop by such helps as were possible in his life; while Goethe, possessing it equally, was able, through his greater fortune, to bring it into the highest and noblest activity. This was the element of proportion which was first displayed in perfection by the Greek mind; that adjustment of parts to the whole, of form to spirit, which we call the artistic sense. While Shakespeare was poaching, Goethe was reading Winckelmann and Lessing; while Shakespeare was speculating in wool, Goethe was studying the antique marbles in the halls of the Vatican; while Shakespeare was desiring "this man's art and that man's scope," Goethe could look abroad and say, "It is because none reach my art and my scope that so few fully comprehend me." With such a vast variety of interests as he maintained throughout his life, many of Goethe's lighter works are faulty in construction, but nothing which matured properly in his mind is without its underlying law. Indeed, most of the fragments which he left have the roundness and polish of pebbles, as it were, of thought, smoothed by attrition in the strong current of his mind. This is not mere finish; it also includes fullness, as the veins in a pebble may suggest the strata in a quarry. Many of his detached utterances thus hint of a broad background of thought. Take one as a specimen, though its force is crippled by being turned into prose: "Timid wavering of nerveless thought, effemi-

nate irresolution, anxious lamentation, turn away no misfortune from thee, cannot liberate thee. To hold oneself erect, defying all forces, never swaying, showing original strength, brings down the arms of God in aid." Here is another: "Impatience is of no service; still less remorse. The latter increases the offense; the former creates new ones."

In dramatic presentation of character Goethe is far inferior to the greatest of all masters. Shakespeare is universal in his apprehension of human nature; Goethe is universal in his range of intellectual capacities and in his culture. One is greater, the other riper. Goethe lacks two of the most important elements of success as a dramatist—inventive genius and rapidity of movement. After *Egmont*, which was an effort to overcome his natural deficiencies, but which cannot be called a complete success, he gave more attention to dramatic poems than to acting plays. He was an admirable critic, and his counsels helped to make Schiller's *Wallenstein* what it is; yet it is doubtful whether the material of *Wallenstein*, in his own hands, would have been as satisfactorily modelled as by Schiller. Without undervaluing the genius manifested in *Götz von Berlichingen* and *Egmont*, it must be confessed that they lack the equal power and completeness of such poems as *Iphigenie auf Tauris* or *Hermann und Dorothea*. Yet Goethe possessed a strong dramatic genius; he had the power of illustrating by the force of contrast, and the power of presenting characters in their proper objective independence; but it seems that there were wide differences in the combination of his many gifts. In other words,

certain forms of activity were more free and natural to him than others. It would, indeed, be a miracle if this had not been so.

It was Goethe's habit to use every form of his own personal experience in life, but only after the feeling which accompanied it had become a memory. He prefaces his lyrics with the couplet:

> Early sounds that echo long:
> Joy and sorrow turn to song.

And in his *Trilogy of Passion*, the most youthfully fervid poem ever written by a man over seventy years of age, are the lines:

> While men their torment suffer, and are dumb,
> A God gave me to utter mine in song.

One consequence of this power is that all passion in his verse obeys the supreme law of proportion. The keenest emotions are expressed, but the author himself is serene. Calm and self-poised, he paints every ecstasy or every pang; he does not attempt to revive the feeling, only to remember it. We cannot imagine his eye "in fine frenzy rolling" as he writes it—but rather the impartial eye of a spirit, surveying the past life of the earth. Goethe has been called cold, unsympathetic, selfish, on account of this quality; and even to the present day a large class of people are unable to consider it in any other light. There are many who hide their own tears, but expect the author to weep in public.

Now, the objective treatment of one's revelations of

life, or of what is observed in the lives of others, is the highest achievement of literary art. Whatever of truth is thus presented has a general, not an individual significance, and the truth that dwells in passion cannot be clearly seen while the air of poetry is thick with the very cloud of passion itself. All strong emotions suspend the impartial activity of the intellect, and this is the reason why eloquence is so rarely impartial.

Although Goethe possessed this intellectual serenity, as we may call it, his finer faculties were no more under control than in the case of less gifted authors. He could not say to the Ariel of his imagination "Come," and he came, but was obliged to wait the pleasure of the beautiful sprite. As his habit was to arrange the plan of a poem in all its parts before putting it in words, he was thus able to work upon any part of it, according to his mood. After a certain amount of progress was made, the manuscript sheets were stitched together, the parts not yet written being filled out with blank paper of a different color; and as often as one of these sheets was removed and the manuscript inserted in its place, Goethe felt himself freshly encouraged to go on with the task. He was accustomed to say at such times: "I not only know, in my own mind, how much I have added, but it is now palpable to my external senses."

Censure and Adulation.

It is not necessary here to enter into an examination of Goethe's occasional shortcomings. Everyone knows that Homer sometimes nods; that even Shakespeare

sometimes rants; and the admission that Goethe has occasionally mistaken coarseness for satire, or gravity for wisdom, cannot affect his supreme place in literature. Had he not possessed a remarkable power of self-restraint, he would doubtless have sinned more frequently. His position at Weimar, for the first ten years, was more difficult than we can now imagine, and when it had been acknowledged, he stood almost alone as an author until Schiller came to his side. During the excitement which followed the overthrow of Napoleon he was denounced as an enemy of Germany; but finally the most absolute homage came to him from all quarters, giving to his old age a character of literary sovereignty which he enjoyed without dispute. A lesser genius would have been affected by this perversity of circumstances; but he, "standing erect, defying all forces, never swaying, showing original strength, called down the arms of the gods to his aid." In him character and intellect were not so closely united as in Lessing; his vital power overran into wayward impulses in his early years, and sometimes broke away from control in later life; but we must judge a man, after all, as much by what he restrains himself from doing as by what he does, and Goethe has as much right to the plea as a less exalted intelligence. As a mental power he was splendidly steadfast. He was as apt at detecting shams as Carlyle, but he pierced them without making any noise about it. So far as he assumes to reach directly, it is an exact consonance with the suggestions of all his highest works; he preaches independence, self-reliance, tolerance, mutual help, cheerful acceptance

of every fortune, growth as a necessity of being, and knowledge as a necessity of growth.

In the poetic appreciation of nature, Goethe has scarcely an equal among modern authors. The transfer to natural objects of the poet's sentiments, the reflection in them of his varying moods, the creation of a sentient spirit beneath the forms of the visible world—all this belongs to modern literature. In English literature it virtually originated with Cowper, was continued by Wordsworth, made popular by Byron and Shelley, until now it has become the field which all young authors endeavor to tread. But Goethe was before Cowper and Wordsworth, far more subtle and intimate than the former, and wholly without the air of purpose which we cannot help feeling in many of Wordsworth's descriptive passages. Goethe presents nature to us through light and odor, and atmosphere and perspective. Many instances might be given of the delicate instinct which enables him to suggest a landscape in a single line, to give us the very soul of natural objects in phrases so simple that they startle while they charm.

Characteristics.

Goethe differs from all other great writers, except, perhaps, Milton, in this respect, that his works cannot be understood without a knowledge of his life, and that his life is in itself a work of art greater than any which it created. At the same time he is so great that we are not even yet sufficiently removed from him by lapse of time to be able to form a correct judgment of his place

in literary history. He is not only the greatest poet of Germany; he is one of the greatest poets of all ages, and posterity must decide his exact position in that small and chosen company which contains the names of Homer, Dante and Shakespeare. He was the apostle of self-culture. Always striving after objective truth, and sometimes obtaining it, he exhibited to the world every phase of his plastic mind in turn, and taught both by precept and example the husbandry of the soul. The charge of selfishness so often brought against him cannot be maintained. His nature responded to every influence of passing emotion; like a delicate harp, it was silent if not touched, and yet gave its music to every wooing of the wind. The charge of unsympathetic coldness roused the deep indignation of those who knew him best. He learned by sad experience that the lesson of life is to renounce. Rather than cavil at his statuesque repose, we should learn to admire the conflict and self-command which molded the exuberance of his impulsive nature into monumental symmetry and proportion. His autobiography has done him no wrong. It is the story, not of his life, but of his recollections. He needs no defense, nothing but sympathetic study. As Homer concentrated in himself the spirit of antiquity, Dante of the middle ages, Shakespeare of the Renaissance, so Goethe is the representative of the modern spirit, the prophet of mankind under new circumstances and new conditions, the appointed teacher of ages yet to be.

In connection with the Weimar circle, of which Goethe was so long the central attraction, the following extract from one of Thackeray's letters to G. H.

Lewis, author of the *Life and Works of Goethe* may be of interest: "I can fancy nothing more serene, majestic and healthy looking than the grand old Goethe.

"Though his sun was setting, the sky was calm and bright, and that little Weimar illumined by it. In every one of those kind salons the talk was still of art and letters. In the respect paid to the patriarch of letters there was something ennobling alike to the subject and the sovereign. With a five and twenty years' experience since those happy days of which I write, I think I have never seen a society more simple, charitable, courteous, gentlemanlike than that of the dear little Saxon city where the good Schiller and the great Goethe lived and lie buried."

Says another of his intimate friends: "Goethe's heart, which few knew, was as great as his intellect, which all knew."

III.

The Romantic School.

The most important literary movement originated during the lifetime of Goethe was that of the Romantic school, whose leading members at first attached themselves to him, but gradually diverged more and more from his spirit. The aim of this school was to assert for modern feeling the right to a freer and more varied utterance than can be provided for it by the forms of classic literature. They were not in sympathy with their own time; they found it tame, prosaic, colorless, and to enrich it with new elements they went back to mediævalism, in which, as they conceived it, daily life had not been divorced from poetry. They drew enthusiastic pictures of the middle ages, of the charms of chivalry, of the loyalty of each class to the class above it and to society as a whole, of the devout piety which was supposed to regulate the conduct of prince and peasant alike, and which revealed itself in splendid church architecture and a gorgeous ritual. With a like purpose the Romanticists pointed to Oriental life, and began the serious study of Sanskrit and Persian poetry. The chief writers whom they opposed to the classical

poets, both of antiquity and of modern times, were Shakespeare and Calderon, but they also brought to light many mediæval authors who had previously been neglected, and stimulated their countrymen to a systematic study of the whole of their past history.

The Romanticist did not strike out a wholly original path; for there were in the writings of Lessing, Schiller and Goethe—especially of Goethe—elements in full harmony with all that was best in the new tendency. They were guilty of grotesque exaggeration in their descriptions of the superior happiness of mediæval nations and Oriental peoples, and they did much harm by checking the rising appreciation of measure and order in literary form which had been encouraged by the great classical writers. In practical life also their labors led to results opposed to the progressive tendencies of the age; for in the case of many adherents of the Romantic school, enthusiasm for the middle ages soon ceased to be a mere literary fancy—they strove also to reproduce absolute mediæval ideas. Many of them joined the Roman Catholic church and became the most vehement opponents of spiritual and political freedom. Still the Romanticist gave prominence to certain vital principles. That we now feel the charm of what was great and beautiful in the middle ages is in part the result of their teachings, and to some extent we owe the recognition of deeper elements in the world than reason can formulate, and the conviction that the thought of each age must create for itself a medium of expression adapted to its special nature.

"At the Court of Weimar," says John G. Robertson,

in his *History of German Literature,* "the last night of the eighteenth century was celebrated by a masquerade arranged by Goethe himself, and midnight being passed, he, Schiller, the philosopher Schelling and the Norwegian Steffens withdrew into a side room, where they made eloquent speeches and drank a welcome to the new century in champagne. It is not surprising, in view of the history of the preceding hundred years, that German literature should have entered upon the new era with boundless hope and enthusiasm; but, as has already been indicated, the immediate future did not belong to the humanism which had formed the goal of the best tendencies of the eighteenth century. Two years before that century had reached its close, a new intellectual movement, Romanticism, had taken definite shape, and this movement stood sponsor at the birth of the new epoch. Of the little group that hailed the nineteenth century so enthusiastically at the Weimar masquerade, Schelling and Steffens were leading spirits in the Romantic school; Schiller, though by nature little of a Romanticist, was at that very time engaged upon a Romantic tragedy, while to Goethe, the author of *Wilhelm Meister,* the new school looked up with reverence as its master.

"It is one of the ironies of literary history that the Romantic school should have been founded in the metropolis of rationalism, in Berlin. But Berlin was only the birthplace of the school; in the following year the chief Romanticists found a more congenial home in Jena. The principles and aims of Romanticism were, at this early period, vague and indefinite; but from the

first the school was the centre for a group of brilliant men and hardly less brilliant women, drawn together by a determination to have done with the utilitarianism which still flourished under the protection of writers like Nicolai—men and women inspired by a common idealism, by a craving for a spiritual, more unworldly poetry and art, and for a form of artistic expression that was in harmony with life. The Romantic school, it is true, ultimately drifted into a mystic Catholicism, a blind worship of the mediæval, a glorification of 'Volkspoesie,' all of which tendencies were potentially present in the movement from the first, but some years elapsed before these principles stiffened into dogmas. The spirit of the new movement was synthetic and subjective, individualistic and national. Romanticism is the characteristic expression of the German temperament, just as that of the Latin races is associated with the word 'classic.'"

Schlegel the Elder.

The brothers Schlegel, August and Friedrich, play a conspicuous part in the literary circle which initiated and in part constituted the Romantic school, forming the centre of the brilliant group which included Fichte, Schelling, Tieck and Wilhelm von Humboldt. They assumed dictatorial authority and exercised a controlling influence—salutary in the main—on the current literature of their time. It was the influence of criticism, not of example, often unduly severe, but none the less potent on that account. Of the two brothers, Friedrich,

the younger, is commonly affirmed to be the greater genius; but it is not very clear on what grounds this superiority is claimed for him. Both were men of extraordinary ability, and if Friedrich gives the impression of greater originality, it is owing, perhaps, to his more eccentric and extreme views.

August Wilhelm, son of Adolf Schlegel, a pastor at Hanover, was born in 1767, studied philology in the university of Göttingen, where he became a favorite with the poet Burger, who called him his beloved son in Apollo, and where he gained the prize for a Latin dissertation on the geography of Homer, and furnished the index to Heyne's Virgil. After leaving the university and spending some years as a private tutor in the household of an Amsterdam banker, he returned to Germany and established himself in Jena, where he received, in 1798, the appointment of professor of literature. It was there that he became intimate with Tieck, Schelling and other men of note, and edited, in connection with his brother, the *Athenæum,* the journal of the Romantic school, and one of the most powerful critical organs in Germany. In 1802 he went to Berlin, where he lectured for two years on literature and art. Here he made the acquaintance of Madame de Staël, who received from him the greater part of the information concerning German literature embodied in her work, *De l'Allemagne.* He travelled four years in her company, sojourning for a while in the principal capitals of Europe. While in Vienna he delivered the celebrated lectures on dramatic literature which mark an epoch in dramatic criticism. In Sweden he was made coun-

cillor of legation, and received the diploma of nobility. Returning to Germany he distinguished himself by his political brochures, written in German and in French, and in 1818 was called to the chair of literature in the new university of Bonn.

Germany, the land of scholars, has produced few who have so good a title to that designation as the elder Schlegel. The range of his literary culture may be estimated by the fact that he wrote with equal ease in four different languages, and was able to translate into Latin the *Gragas* from the Icelandic, and the *Bhagavad Gîta* from the Sanskrit. Into his native German he translated the three great poets of three nations —Shakespeare, Dante and Calderon. His renderings of Dante and Calderon have never been surpassed, and it is claimed for him that he has made Shakespeare write in German; that there is nothing enjoyed by an English reader in his plays which a German may not enjoy as well; but it is probable that much of the translating was done by his wife, and it is significant that, after their separation, his edition of Shakespeare was left to be completed by other hands. He wrote, also, original poems, and among other works a tragedy entitled *Ion*, in the antique style; but his own compositions found little favor with either critics or the public; they are but insignificant appendages to his graver productions, and would not probably have survived without them.

With all his vanity and other weaknesses, Schlegel was a man of extraordinary powers. As a critic he achieved a lasting fame, and in spite of some partiali-

ties, must be reckoned among the foremost of his class —less original, perhaps, than Lessing, but equally ingenious and profound. Many views which are now familiar he was the first to enunciate. The following is from his lectures on dramatic literature:

"The distinction between Classic and Romantic literature can hardly fail to appear well founded if it can be shown that the same contrasts in the works of the ancients and moderns run symmetrically, I might almost say systematically, through every branch of art as far as our knowledge of antiquity extends; that it is as evident in music and the plastic arts as in poetry. Rousseau acknowledges the contrast in music, and demonstrates that rhythm and melody constituted the prevailing principle of the ancients and the harmony of the moderns. On the subject of the plastic arts it has been aptly observed that the ancient painters were perhaps too much sculptors, and that the modern sculptors are too much painters. This is the exact point of difference, and it can also be shown that the spirit of ancient poetry is plastic, and that of the modern picturesque. An example taken from another art—that of architecture—will serve to illustrate what is meant.

"The Parthenon is not more different from Westminster abbey or the church of St. Stephen at Vienna than the structure of a tragedy of Sophocles from a drama of Shakespeare. The comparison between these wonderful productions of poetry and architecture might be carried still further. But does our admiration of the one compel us to depreciate the other? We will quarrel with no one for his predilection, either for the

Grecian or the Gothic; the world is wide, and affords room for a great diversity of objects. Narrow and exclusive prepossessions will never constitute a genuine critic or connoisseur, who ought, on the contrary, to possess the power of elevating himself above all partial views and of subduing all personal inclinations."

He refers the different styles of poetry to the difference in character and religion between the Greeks and the moderns:

"With the Greeks human nature was in itself all-sufficient. They were conscious of no wants and aspired to no higher perfection than that which they could actually attain by the exercise of their own faculties. The very reverse of all this is the case with the Christian. Everything finite and mortal is lost in the contemplation of infinity. Life has become a shadow, and the first dawning of our real existence opens in the world beyond the grave. Such a religion must awaken the foreboding which slumbers in every heart to the most thorough consciousness that the happiness after which we strive we can never here attain; that no external object can ever fill our souls; and that every mortal enjoyment is but a fleeting and momentary illusion. When the soul, resting as it were beneath the willows of exile, breathes out its longing for its distant home, the prevailing character of its songs must be melancholy. Hence the poetry of the ancients was the poetry of enjoyment, and ours is that of desire. The former has its foundation in the present; the latter hovers between memory and hope."

In France Schlegel was almost as well known as in

the Fatherland, attracting great attention by an essay in French, in which he compared Racine with Euripides. In England and the United States, while his poems are neglected, his critical works are read to-day at least as widely as those of Lessing. As a translator he has rarely been excelled; by his study of Sanskrit he helped to prepare the way for the development of the science of language; and in criticism he exercised a strong influence by the emphasis with which he marked the distinction between Classical and Romantic literature. Of the domestic life of Schlegel we have few records, except that he was twice married, each time to the daughter of a professor, and that both his wives separated from him soon after their marriage. He lived to be seventy-seven, passing away at Bonn on the 12th of May, 1845.

Schlegel the Younger.

Karl Wilhelm Friedrich von Schlegel, his brother's junior by five years, was destined by his father for a mercantile life, and placed in a counting room at Leipsic; but feeling in himself a vocation for letters, at the age of sixteen he cut short his apprenticeship and began to prepare for the university. At Göttingen and Leipsic he studied philology, giving special attention to ancient literature, and here he published an essay on the *Greeks and Romans,* followed soon afterward by a work on their poetry. At the beginning of the century he was a tutor at Jena, and in company with his brother edited the *Athenæum,* in which he promulgated with

extravagant zeal the principles of the Romantic school, insisting first of all that poetry must not be divorced from life; that to constitute any one a true poet his life must be steeped in poetry. He further undertook to enforce this principle in his unfinished novel, *Lucinde*, in which he advocates free love as altogether a more poetic relation of the sexes than the hard Philistine institution of marriage. He illustrated his doctrine by eloping with the wife of one Veit, a degenerate daughter of Mendelssohn, who left her husband and children, accompanied him to Paris as his wife, and afterward joined him in his apostasy when, in pursuance of his romantic principles, he went over to the church of Rome. His change of faith secured to him the favorable notice of the Austrian government and a friendly reception at Vienna, whither he repaired, and where he was made secretary to the chancellor of State. While in Paris he embodied the results of his Oriental studies in a work which entitled him to rank as the pioneer of Sanskrit scholarship in Germany.

In 1809, attached to the service of Archduke Charles, he distinguished himself as a diplomat by his official papers in the war against Napoleon, and as a literary man by his lectures on modern literature. The high estimation in which his diplomatic services were held caused him to be appointed, in 1815, secretary of legation to the German Diet. On his return to Vienna he gave a course of lectures, afterward published under the title of the *Philosophy of Life,* and edited the *Concordia,* a journal aiming to reconcile conflicting opinions in church and state. We next find him in Dresden

lecturing on the philosophy of language; but the lectures were not completed, for he died while the course was in progress, on the 11th of January, 1829—died in the midst of an unfinished sentence. A stroke of apoplexy put an end to the writing and the writer.

Neither of the Schlegels won fame as a dramatist, Friedrich's only tragedy, *Alarias,* being an unsuccessful attempt to combine romantic and classic elements. His poetry is certainly of a higher order than that of Augustus. But while it escapes the hardness and flatness of the latter, it runs to the opposite extreme of fantasticism and mysticism. One of the best of his compositions is the *Roland,* an heroic poem written in the same metre with Longfellow's *Hiawatha.* But the best of his poems are not the best of his works; and had he written only poetry he would not have held the place which he occupies on the roll of German authors. His strength, like that of his brother, lies in the direction of philosophic criticism. There we must concede to him eminent ability, even though we may dissent from his Romanistic views of persons and events.

Novalis.

The fairest, purest blossom of the Romantic school was its so-called prophet, Friedrich von Hardenberg, better known as Novalis, one of those ideal beings in whom spirit so predominates over flesh as to give one the impression of a stranger in earthly scenes, an ethereal visitant "moving about in worlds not yet realized." It would, indeed, be difficult to find a match

for this rare genius among the authors of modern times. Of Germans, Körner; of Englishmen, Shelley and Keats; and of Americans, Nathaniel Hawthorne, suggest themselves as nearest to him in their unworldliness and their lofty aspirations. Shelley, especially, who died at nearly the same age, resembles him in the ethereality of his genius. But Novalis added to nearly all that Shelley possessed intellectually a deeper intuition; and to all that Shelley was morally, a childlike, affectionate nature and a reverent faith. In his unfinished romance, *Heinrich von Ofterdingen,* he fully reveals his mystical and sensitive spirit, penetrated by religious aspiration, and feeling itself ill at ease in the hard, rough world. These qualities are still more pathetically expressed in his poems, in the best of which he reveals his spiritual emotions.

Though with many other points of difference, that which most distinguishes Novalis from his literary contemporaries is his deep religiousness, a piety distinctively Christian, a piety which clings to the personal Christ, and rejoices in the consciousness of a personal relation with him. In early youth, after the death of his betrothed, which shattered his whole being, he experienced what is technically called a conversion, and this is indicated in one of his hymns. "In a time of utter misery," he writes, "when all my wishes lay in the grave, and it was a torment to be still on the earth, suddenly, as from above, the stone was rolled away from the sepulchre, and a new life opened up to me."

Nominally Novalis was a Lutheran, but he seems to have felt no special attraction to any particular sect.

His religion was not of the ecclesiastical order. His devoutness was not only free from formalism and cant, or any of that outward show which often accompanies the religious life, but consisted with the utmost freedom and boldness of thought, and with utterances which might seem shocking to conventional pietism. The same pen which indited a number of devout and beautiful hymns could also write: "Miracles as contradictions of nature would be unmathematical. But there are no miracles in that sense. Nothing is miraculous to mathematics." Again he declares: "If God could be man, he can also be stone, plant, animal, element. In this way, perhaps, there is a continual redemption in nature."

Wiedersteldt, a family estate in Saxony, was the birthplace of Novalis, and the date, 1772. He was a son of Baron von Hardenberg, director of the Saxon salt works, a wealthy, energetic man of business, who combined great practical ability with a cheerful temperament, lofty morals and strong religious faith; his wife was a loving and devoutly Christian woman, whose chief interest in life was the temporal and spiritual welfare of her household. Novalis was the second of twelve children, and a sickly childhood delayed the unfolding of his mental faculties. No bud of promise appeared in the boy until his ninth year, when, encouraged by an older sister, who for that purpose took part in his tasks, he began to show what was in him. At the age of eighteen he entered the university of Jena, afterward that of Leipsic as a student of law, and finished his academic course at Wittenberg.

His thirst for knowledge impelled him to seek it in all directions. In addition to the studies embraced in his curriculum proper, he applied himself to science and philosophy. Impatient of sciolism and vague generalities, he aimed at thoroughness in all that he undertook. In Jena he became acquainted with Fichte, who had been a protégé of his father, and with Schelling, first a pupil of Fichte, but whom he soon superseded. In converse with these men he imbibed the philosophic spirit which guided all his inquiries and which animates all his writings. Novalis was destined, not less by his own preference than by the wish of his father, for a life of business. To this end he studied the principles and technicalities of trade in Tennstedt with Just, who afterward became his biographer; then chemistry with the celebrated chemist, Mingleb, in Langensalza, and mineralogy with Werner, in Freiberg. By these studies he qualified himself to pass the required examination, which procured for him the post of assessor, where his scientific preparation suggested important improvements which he did not live to realize. These preparatory studies, often interrupted by illness and other disturbing events, were prolonged through a period of six years; and within that term, from the close of his college days until his death, his literary labors, the avocations only of his leisure hours, are all comprised.

On one of his professional journeys he made, at Grüningen, in the neighborhood of Arnstadt, in Thüringen, the acquaintance of Sophie von Kühn, a girl of thirteen, for whom he immediately conceived a romantic passion, like that which the child Beatrice inspired in

the boy Dante—a passion which was for him also the source of a new intellectual life. Says one of his most intimate friends: "The first sight of this beautiful and wondrously lovely figure was decisive for all his future. One may say that the sentiment which then penetrated and animated him made the contents of his whole life. Even on childish forms there is sometimes stamped an expression which, as being too blessedly and spiritually fair and lovely, we call unearthly, heavenly; and in the contemplation of these transfigured, almost transparent faces, the fear befalls us that they are too delicate, too finely-woven for this life, that it is death or immortality which gazes on us out of those gleaming eyes; and it often happens that a swift decline verifies our fears. All who have known this idol of our friend's devotion are agreed that no description can express the grace and heavenly atmosphere in which that unearthly being moved, the beauty and majesty which enveloped her. Novalis became a poet whenever he spoke of her."

Notwithstanding the difference in their ages, he obtained the consent of her parents to their betrothal; but years must elapse before her maturity and his civil position would allow of their union. That union never took place. After long illness and a painful operation his beloved died on the eve of her fifteenth birthday. Novalis had applied himself to medicine, had studied her case pathologically, with the hope of saving her; he could not believe in the possibility of her being taken from him. He was absent at the time of her death, and his friends were afraid to communicate the tidings,

until at length his brother Karl took upon himself the needful office. He was stunned by the blow. As soon as he could rally he repaired to Arnstadt, the town nearest the family estate of the Kühns, and obtained permission to shut himself up for whole days in the room where Sophie died. A sister of the family, led by curiosity to enter the chamber, was startled at beholding what seemed at first an apparition of the dead. Novalis had dressed a lay figure in the robe and cap which she wore on the sick bed, and placed the book she last read by its side, in order to assist his imagination in recalling her image.

For a time the mourner was disqualified for study, for all occupation but that of brooding over his loss. It was impressed on his mind that he should follow his beloved before the expiration of the year. But the year expired and he still lived. The lapse of time, though it left him still a mourner, had somewhat blunted the keen edge of his affliction; his grief had changed from a fierce passion to a tender reminiscence. It may seem unnatural, but in reality it was perfectly natural, and entirely consistent with sincere devotion to the memory of his first love, that he should form a new matrimonial engagement. There was a void in his life which only a woman could fill. He needed a feminine comforter, and he found one in Julie von Charpentier, daughter of an officer of the mines in Freiberg, where he was then occupied with the study of mineralogy. The second love was less passionate than the first, but not less genuine, and gave rich promise of domestic happiness in the culture and character of its object. But

this, too, was a promise which was never to be realized. The brief remnant of Novalis' life did not suffice for its fulfillment.

The three succeeding years were years of peace, of social enjoyment and vigorous action. It was during this term that his best works were composed. But his bodily constitution, always feeble, could never satisfy the demands of his soul, and soon succumbed to wasting disease. On the 25th of March, 1801, a few weeks before his twenty-ninth birthday, he fell asleep, to wake no more in the flesh, while listening to the music of the piano, on which his brother Karl was playing at his request. It is seldom that the early death of a writer has left so strong an impression of a great possibility lost to letters and mankind.

The writings of Novalis, besides the unfinished novel *Heinrich von Ofterdingen,* an apotheosis of poesy, which was to have been his masterpiece, are the *Hymns to Night, The Disciples at Sais,* also an unfinished work, and a number of poems and philosophic aphorisms. Of the poems, by far the finest are the hymns; they are unsurpassed by any in the German language, expressing deep feeling and religious experience in pure and melodious verse. The author's father, a practical man of affairs, with no taste for poetry, and not much liking though not opposing Friedrich's attempts in that kind, heard one Sunday in the Moravian chapel a hymn which affected him as he had never before been affected by a sacred song, reaching down to the inmost depths of his being. On the way home, after the service, he asked a neighbor whose hymn it was that the congregation

had sung that day. "Is it possible," was the answer, "that you do not know your son's hymn?"

The aphorisms, or philosophical fragments, constitute about one-half of what is left to us of Novalis' writings. They abound in quaint suggestions and original views, sometimes paradoxical, always thoughtful, often profound; revealing an independent thinker, careless of systems, but with a reach far beyond his years. The following will serve as specimens:

"Humanity is the higher sense of our planet, the eye which it lifts toward Heaven."

"Nature is an enemy of eternal possessions. According to fixed laws she destroys all signs of property. The earth belongs to all generations. Each has a claim upon all. The earlier should derive no advantage from the accident of primogeniture."

"The seat of the soul is where the inner and the outer world meet. In sleep, soul and body are equally diffused."

"Mortality and mutability are the privilege of higher natures. Perpetuity belongs to beings devoid of spirit. Perfection is the synthesis of eternity and time."

"There is but one temple in the world, and that is the human body. Nothing is more sacred than this divine form. Bowing to men is homage rendered to this revelation in the flesh."

"The act of transcending self is everywhere the highest, the primal point, the genesis of life."

"Where children are, there is the golden age."

"Every Englishman is an island."

"Be men, and the rights of man will come of themselves."

Brentano.

One of the most ambitious of the Romanticists was Clemens Brentano, who, while possessing strong orig-

inality and power of imagination, was too indifferent to form to produce any permanent impression. Of far more value than anything he wrote himself was *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, a book of popular lyrics collected in conjunction with his brother-in-law, Achim von Arnim. His sister, Bettina, was famous for her acquaintance and correspondence with Goethe, which lasted for several years, and was only brought to a close by her offensive behavior to his wife. After the poet's death she published their correspondence, claiming that many of the sonnets addressed to her were partly versifications of her own ideas. But the imputation was refuted, and Bettina sank into obscurity.

Arnim.

Another distinguished member of the Romantic school was Ludwig Achim von Arnim, in whose works are evidences of great natural power, though they suffer the penalty which attaches to a total neglect of art. A native of Berlin, he studied medicine at Vienna and Göttingen, taking his degree, but never practicing as a physician. His first literary performance had for its subject the natural sciences, but even in this he displays the fondness for the supernatural and the predilection for romance so strongly marked in his next work, *Ariel's Offenbarungen*. For several years, beginning with 1804, he travelled through parts of Germany, collecting old popular legends and songs. A selection from these he published at Heidelberg, in conjunction with Clemens Brentano, whose sister he married. His

works include a humorous dramatic romance, entitled *Halle and Jerusalem*, and a number of dramatic pieces included in his *Schaubühne*. That he did not contribute more to the drama was due to the interruption caused by the wars with Napoleon, and it was not until peace was declared that he wrote his greatest romance, *Die Kronenuächter*, the scene of which is laid in the time of the emperor Maximilian. He was also the author of the *Wintergarten*, a collection of tales, and an excellent novel styled *Die Gräfin Dolores*. After his death, in 1831, his writings were very favorably criticised by Heine, and were published at Berlin in connected form.

IV.

Hoffmann and Fouqué.

Of the various interests which supply the material of fiction, the element in human nature to which the literature of fiction ministers, there is none so prevalent and none so persistent as the love of the marvellous; and notably of that form of the marvellous which finds its topics in a world beyond the reach of known laws, that is to say, the preternatural. The progress of scientific culture has not outgrown the delight which children find in fairy tales, or the gratification which riper age derives from ghost stories told in good faith—stories which the narrator himself believes.

"The drama," says Robertson in his *History of German Literature*, "was the stepchild of Romanticism. The passivity of the Romantic creed on the one hand, and on the other the passionate craving to break down the boundaries between the arts, between art and literature, between life and literature, between nature and art, were anything but favorable to the development of a literary form which can only flourish in obedience to laws and draw nourishment from an active conception of existence. In the pre-Romantic days of 'Sturm

and Drang' a living drama was still possible, for life was then regarded as action; the 'Stürmer and Dranger' scorned the rules of dramatic construction even more heartily than their successors, but they firmly believed in the mighty deed. When, however, we turn to the Romantic school, with its essentially lyric ideals of poetry, its preference for the passive aspects of life, we find the drama reduced to a mere shadow of its true self."

Robertson considers Heinrich von Kleist the greatest of the Romantic dramatists, remarking that he wrote his masterpieces under the influence of the patriotism kindled in German minds by the tyranny of Napoleon. Next he ranks Werner—leaving Tieck out of consideration—and deals very lightly with the manifold absurdities of his blood and thunder plays.

A very different entertainment is offered in that treatment of the preternatural which aims not to thrill with terror, but to amuse with mild surprise; which carries humor into ghostdom and devildom, and forces them to exhibit a grotesque side, where the ludicrous neutralizes the horrible. There is a species of fiction which finds the preternatural in ordinary everyday life, which places us in a world where the commonest things and persons take on a weird character—as if the teapot on our breakfast table should turn up its nose, or the armchair dance a minuet, or a horse should ogle us with knowing human eyes, suggesting a metamorphosed human soul; or *vice-versa,* our worthy grocer, let us say, with whom we have traded these many years, should suddenly put off his human disguise and stand

before us in his native character of an owl or an ass. We have all of us read *Alice in Wonderland*. Suppose that Wonderland treated as a reality, not as a dream; suppose it charged with an ironical motive, and we have a species of composition purely German, one of which Hoffmann was a consummate master.

Hoffmann's Fame.

Ernst Theodor Wilhelm Hoffmann was long one of the most popular among the authors who wrote in the spirit of the Romantic school. He was famous especially for his grotesque treatment of ghostly and horrible themes, and his works indicate a deep appreciation of some of the more mysterious aspects of human nature. Hoffmann was fitted to excel in the higher departments of literature. There was in him the material for a great historian, the possibility of a great philosophical essayist, and in music, especially, no one was better fitted to elaborate a philosophical theory of an art in which he was also a practical proficient. While not himself a dramatist, his works have been freely dramatized, and none of his contemporaries exercised a more powerful influence on his school But, though a man of extraordinary gifts, he was one of a class, unhappily too numerous, whose genius has been dimmed and damaged by moral weakness and irregularity of life. Hoffmann was one of those vivid and gifted writers whose genius, never cultured or elaborated into purity, finds loud and sudden, rather than judicious or permanent admiration, and whose history, full of error

and perplexed vicissitude, excites regret in a few and wonder in many.

Boyhood and Education.

Hoffmann was born at Königsberg, in Prussia, on the 24th of January, 1776. His father, a jurist of some distinction, held an office connected with one of the Prussian courts. His mother was sickly and peevish, and when Ernst, their second child, had reached his fourth year, his parents discovered that they could not live together, and by mutual consent dissolved their ill-assorted union. The father left Königsberg, and seems to have troubled himself no more about his offspring. The other parent retired with Ernst to her mother's house, also in Königsberg, and there, in painful inaction, wore out seventeen sick and pitiable years before death put a period to her sufferings. Ernst, meanwhile, was placed in the charge of an uncle especially unfitted for that trust, and of an aunt who petted and did her best to spoil him. He was sent to the classical school at Königsberg, and in due season entered the university. He was diligent in his preparation for the legal profession, but devoted a large portion of his time to painting and music. In the former art he never became more than a clever caricaturist, but in music he attained high distinction both as composer and performer.

At the age of eighteen Ernst was admitted to the office of auscultator in the court of Königsberg, where the duties of the office were light and the salary proportionally small. His leisure, which hung heavily enough on his hands, he endeavored to fill up with

other pursuits; he gave lessons in music; he painted wild landscapes and grotesque figures; and he wrote two novels, one of which he had hoped to see in print; but it was returned to him after a long delay, for the alleged reason that it was anonymous. And now his position became extremely uncomfortable, through an incident in the style of the *Nouvelle Héloise*. One of his fair music pupils he found to be too lovely and soft-hearted for his welfare. No marriage could be thought of, for she was far above him in rank, and the entanglements of this affair so pained and oppressed him that he longed to be out of Königsberg.

Life in Poland.

With Hoffmann's removal to Poland, in the spring of 1800, begins a new era of his life; he was now director of his own actions, but, unhappily, he did not direct them well. At Berlin, and even at Great Glogau, there were music and public collections of pictures; at Posen there were neither. His official associates were men who worked hard at their desks, and lived hard when enfranchised from them; they had no tastes for literature or art of any kind, unless it was the arts of cooking and brewing. The Poles also were a lively, jolly people, very much addicted to strong Hungarian wine, and Hoffmann yielded only too readily to the customs of the country, contracting irregular habits from which he never afterward found deliverance. In his leisure hours he sketched a series of caricatures, exhibiting, under the most ludicrous, yet recognizable

aspects, a great number of individuals and transactions, sparing no rank or relation where he thought his satire would tell. On the occasion of a masquerade, a gay companion, his future brother-in-law, equipped like an Italian hawker, proceeded to the ball with the pictures in a basket, and distributed them, each to the ill-wishers of the person whom it represented. Tidings of the affair were sent to Berlin, and the result was Hoffmann's removal to Plozk, a change which he regarded as exile.

In this seclusion Hoffmann passed two regretful but diligent and not unprofitable years, and, what was more to the purpose, he seems to have amended his ways. He had married while at Posen, and his wife was a fair and cultured woman, possessed of many graces, and content and submissive to his will; so that her husband began to substitute the duties and enjoyments of a domestic and studious life for the revelry and riot in which he had before indulged. Moreover, he performed his duties so faithfully that, through the intercession of his superiors and the influence of friends, in the summer of 1804 he was transferred to Warsaw.

To Hoffmann the Polish capital seemed like a vast and continuous masquerade; and for a time he thoroughly enjoyed its exotic, many-colored aspect. His duties were not heavy or difficult, and he performed them punctually; his salary was sufficient; there were theatres and music on every hand; and the streets were peopled with a motley tumult of the strangest forms, gathered from many nations. In a little while he made some acquaintances, especially with Hitzig, a colleague in office, a man of talent and energy, who was of great

service in assisting his friend's intellectual culture, and stood by him in many difficult emergencies.

Director of Musical Theatre.

In Warsaw Hoffmann found intelligent society, libraries, works of art and all else needed for the gratification of his tastes. In connection with Hitzig he founded a musical theatre, at whose performances he officiated, greatly to the satisfaction of his audiences, which represented the rank and fashion of the Polish capital. The decorations were intrusted to Hoffmann, who did not forget to introduce caricature portraits of many of his subscribers, disguised with wings and claws as sphinxes, griffins and other fabulous creatures. His time was now divided between the court and the theatre, where, perched on his scaffold between his paint-pots, with the brush in his hand and a bottle of Hungary by his side, he might, in leisure hours, be seen diligently working, and talking, in the meanwhile, to his friends assembled below. If called to any juridical function, he would doff his painter's jacket, clamber down from the scaffold, wash his hands, and, to the surprise of the parties, transact their business as rapidly and correctly as if he had known no other employment.

The musical theatre prospered beyond expectation; brilliant performances were given, all that was fairest and most talented in Warsaw attending or participating. Hoffmann officiated as leader, was allowed to have done his part with consummate skill; his life was pleasant and prosperous, and doubtless would have continued so,

had not political troubles overtaken him. News came of the battle of Jena; Russian foreposts entered the city; Tartars, Cossacks, Bashkirs increased the chaos of its population. In due time arrived French envoys to treat of a surrender; the Prussians mounted guard with their knapsacks on; and one morning tidings spread over the city that the Praga bridge of boats was on fire, that the Russians and Prussians were retiring on one side and Murat's advance guard entering by the other. The rest is easy to conceive: the Prussian government was at an end in Warsaw; Hoffmann and his associates honestly divided the contents of their strong-box; then closed the partnership, and dispersed, each whither he listed, to seek safety and new employment.

To most of them this was a grievous stroke; but not to Hoffmann. To him Warsaw was still a fine and variegated spectacle; he had money enough for his present wants; of the future he took little heed, or thought loosely that he could live by art, and that art was far better than law. Leaving his large house, where his purse seemed hardly safe from military violence, he took refuge in the garret of the theatre; here were his piano-forte and his library, here his wife and only child; without were Napoleon and his generals, reviews, restaurateurs, theatres, churches with musical monks, and abundance of fellow-loungers to attend him in his pastimes. It was not till after a severe attack of fever, and a most visible contraction of his purse, that he seriously bethought him what he was to do. A sad enough outlook! For art, which had seemed so benignant at a distance, was shy and inaccessible when

he actually applied to her for bread. Hitzig had hastened off to Berlin, and there opened a bookshop, in hope of better times; but his accounts of musical profits in that city were discouraging; and for the journey to Vienna, which he advised, Hoffmann had now no funds. His uncle in Berlin was dead; from his other uncle nothing could be expected; the perplexity was thickening and the means of unravelling it were daily diminishing. For the present he decided to send his wife and daughter to Posen, to live with their relations, and himself to visit Berlin in search of employment.

Dark Days.

But in Berlin he could find no occupation whatever, either as a portrait painter, a teacher or a composer of music; meanwhile the last remnant of his cash—six Friedrichs-d'or, carefully saved for an emergency—were one night filched from his trunk; want stared him in the face; and news came from Posen that his little Cecelia was dead and his wife dangerously ill. In this extremity his heart for a while had well-nigh failed him; but he would not succumb and did not despond; he soon gathered courage and made a fresh attempt. He published in the newspapers an advertisement, offering himself as a music director, on the most moderate terms, in any theatre; and was fortunate enough, soon afterward, to make an engagement with the managers of the Bamberg stage, at that time under the patronage of Count von Soden.

To an ordinary temper this very humble preferment

would have offered but a mortifying contrast with former affluence and official respectability; Hoffmann, however, saw in it the means of realizing his long-cherished wish, a life devoted to art, and hastened to his Bamberg musical appointment with gayer hopes than he had ever felt at any other prospect. Had money or comfort been his chief object, he must have felt cruelly disappointed, for his life for the next seven years differed in no respect from that of an unprosperous strolling player. Nevertheless, he made no complaint; perhaps he really felt little sorrow. "This must do," he writes in his diary, "and it will do." In a wealthier station he might have composed more operas and painted more caricatures, but it is possible enough the world might never have heard of him as a writer. The fate of the first two novels had perhaps disgusted him with authorship; his studies at least had long pointed in other directions; nor was it choice, but necessity, which now led him back to literature. After many periods of stagnation, the Bamberg theatrical cash-box had at length become entirely empty, and portrait-painting and music-teaching were inadequate to the support even of his frugal household. Hoffmann, who in all his straits appears to have disdained pecuniary assistance, now wrote to Rochlitz, editor of the *Musical Chronicle* at Leipsic, soliciting employment, and, by way of testimonial, transmitting some of his recent performances. The letter itself, written with the most fantastic drollery, was testimonial enough; Hoffmann was instantly and gladly accepted, and in ten days two essays were prepared and dispatched; the first of a long

series, afterward collected, enlarged and given to the world under the title of *Fantasy pieces, in the style of Callot*—a French painter of the seventeenth century, noted for his dashing style—with a preface by Richter, with whom Hoffmann had become acquainted at Bamberg.

Fantasies.

The incipient author was delighted with his new work, and Rochlitz and his readers no less with its execution. These Fantasy pieces, turning chiefly on music, exclusively on art, were afterward to make him known to the world as a brilliant and peculiar writer; and they served for the present to supply him with bread, to bring him into favor and employment as a musical composer, and at last to deliver him from Bamberg. In 1813, through the influence of Rochlitz, he formed an engagement at Dresden, again as music-director, in the theatre of one Seconda. This appointment he hailed as a most fortunate change; but his theatrical career was not destined to be at any time propitious. Misfortunes, almost destruction, overtook him even on his journey. Seconda he soon found to be a driveller; the opera shifted from Dresden to Leipsic, and from Leipsic to Dresden; the country was full of Cossacks and gendarmes, and Hoffmann's operatic melodies were drowned in the din of Napoleon's battles. During his residence in Dresden the city was bombarded by the French, and Hoffmann thus relates some of the incidents and dangers witnessed on that occasion. Writing in his diary on the 26th of August, 1813, he says:

"Early in the morning I was awakened by the thunder of cannon. I immediately hastened to the garret of a neighboring house and saw that the French had thrown up a battery at a short distance from our intrenchments, and were hotly engaged with the enemy's battery at the foot of the hill. Tidings came that Napoleon would arrive. I therefore hastened to Brüh terrace, by the great bridge. At eleven o'clock he came, riding on a small sorrel horse, rapidly across the bridge. There was a dead silence among the crowd. He tossed his head vehemently this way and that, with an air which I never noticed in him before. He rode up to the castle, dismounted for a few minutes, then rode back again to the bridge, where he halted, surrounded by several of his marshals. Adjutants galloped back and forth and received their orders, which he gave in a loud voice. He was constantly taking snuff and looking through a small pocket-glass down the Elbe. I had to leave, because the terrace was occupied by the soldiery, and returned to my observatory. Between four and five o'clock the cannonading became most violent—stroke upon stroke; one could hear the balls whistle. People would not believe it; but soon a party wall, at a distance of not more than twenty-five paces, fell, struck by a ball. Then it was evident that the fire was directed against the city. Our position was becoming unsafe, and we hastened to leave it. I was just about to enter the door of my house when a grenade whistled and rattled above my head, and fell at a distance of only fifteen paces, between four wagons filled with powder, just ready to start, and burst, so that the

horses reared and ran. At least thirty people were standing near; but not only did the wagons filled with powder, whose explosion would have annihilated the city, escape, but not a man or horse was injured.

Three days later he writes: "For the first time in my life I have seen a battlefield," and proceeds to describe in vivid language the ghastly sights which met his gaze. On the 30th of August he once more encountered the emperor, "who had a terrible tyrannical look, and with the voice of a lion roared to an accompanying adjutant, 'Vayons!'" On the 22d of October: "The emperor is beaten and retreats in the direction of Erfurt. So I have a well-grounded hope of the best and pleasantest life—a life devoted to art—and all my troubles will be ended."

Prosperity.

His hope of better days was realized, though not exactly as he expected. Till the end of 1814 he led a life more chequered than ever; now quarrelling with Seconda, now sketching caricatures of the French; now writing Fantasies, now looking at battles; sometimes sick, often in danger, generally light of heart and always short of money. Finally, however, the revolution which followed the downfall of Napoleon and restored so many sovereigns to their thrones, restored Hoffmann to his chair of office. He returned to Berlin; was provided with employment; reinstated in his former rights of seniority; and afterward promoted to be Rath in the Exchequer court of the capital.

Hoffmann's situation, after all his buffetings, might now be considered enviable; the income of his post was amply sufficient, and its labor not excessive; his best friends were in his neighborhood; Hitzig was working with him at the same table; his public conduct was irreprehensible, and his literary fame was rapidly spreading. The Fantasies were already universally popular; the *Devil's Elixir,* a novel in two volumes, later translated into English, had just been given to the circulating libraries; and his opera of *Undine,* which Fouqué had versified for Hoffmann's music, and the story of which is told on another page, was placed on the stage with the greatest splendor and the loudest of plaudits, and reviewed with praises by Weber. Hoffmann was happy, and, had he been wise, might still have continued happy; but he was not wise, and in this cup of joy there lurked for him a deadly poison. Nothing was now wanting to his happiness but the possession of certain qualities; yet on these qualities all happiness ultimately depends. Adversity had been his salvation; prosperity proved his ruin.

Berlin at this time prided itself on being somewhat of an Athens; and Hoffmann, the wonder of the day, was invited with the warmest blandishments to participate in its musical and literary teas. But in these polished circles Hoffmann prospered ill; he was sharp-tempered and exceedingly vain; he required the wittiest talk or the most entire audience, and had a heart-hatred to inanity, however refined. He could never make himself at home at these so-called æsthetic tea-parties, entertainments given by persons who made pretensions to

culture, and invited to their salons the lions of the day, partly for gratification of an idle curiosity and partly for the lustre reflected on the host by the celebrity of the guests. To have it to say that last evening Herr Hoffmann was with us, or to be able to quote, as if proceeding from familiar acquaintance, any saying one had heard from him, was full compensation for an outlay of tea and cake and wax-lights.

But Hoffmann was not the man to be lionized; the lion-hunters soon gave him up, and ere long the musical and literary tea-urn was for him a closed fountain. He sought compensation in a circle of roysterish companions, where the wit flowed freely, and more freely still, the wine.

Dissipation.

Hoffmann could not live without society, without excitement, and was content with nothing less than exclusive admiration. His old friends he had not forsaken, for he seldom, and with difficulty, became intimate with a stranger; but their quiet life could not satisfy him; it was clear that the enjoyment he sought was only to be found among his gay, laughter-loving topers, as a guest at their table, or, still better, as their sovereign in the wine-house. To quote again from his biographer: "The order of his life from 1816 downward, was this: On Mondays and Thursdays he passed his forenoons at his post in the Exchequer office; on other days at home, in working; the afternoons he regularly spent in sleep, to which, in summer, perhaps he added a walk; the evenings and

nights were devoted to the tavern. Even when in company, while the other guests went home, he retired to the tavern to await the morning, before which time it was almost impossible to bring him home." Strangers who came to Berlin went to see him at the tavern, which was at once his study, his pulpit and his throne. Here his wit flashed and flamed like an Aurora Borealis, and the table was forever in a roar; and thus, amid tobacco smoke and over coarse earthly liquor, was Hoffmann wasting faculties which might have seasoned the nectar of the gods.

Then began a period of swift decline. Nights spent in carousal, while they wasted the vital forces, also undermined the moral constitution. Yet Hoffmann, we are assured, was no vulgar toper, not one of those who drink for sensual gratification, and drink till they are drunk. He drank only to get himself "mounted," as he termed it; that is, to put himself in condition to take the lead in the converse of wit. He drank for inspiration; and when it came, when fairly mounted, he charmed his hearers hour after hour with the flow and sparkle of his discourse. But the quantity needed for this at the outset soon ceased to suffice. Ever more liberal potations were required to produce the desired effect. Nor could these "noctes ambrosinæ" replace, they rather increased, the loss of brain power caused by the intellectual labors of the day. Only sleep could restore that loss, and sleep with him was reduced to two or three hours. Thus the candle was lighted at both ends; he lived, as it were, on the gallop, and of such a life the term is short.

Very remarkable it is that his legal duties were not infringed, nor his legal performances impaired, by this wild living. He was always in his place in court, and his written decisions remain to this day models of conscientious investigation, clear judgment and luminous statement. Meanwhile his literary activity continued. He gave forth in rapid succession his *Night-pieces,* his *Dialogue Between Two Theatre-Managers,* his *Master Flea,* his *Tomcat Murr's Views of Life,* his *Princess Brambilla,* his *Kleine Zaches,* and, one after another, the four volumes of his *Serapionsbrüder.*

Hoffmann's Friends.

The *Serapion Brothers* owed its origin to the kind endeavor of Hitzig to wean his friend from his boon companions of the tavern by providing intellectual entertainment, accompanied by less ruinous conditions. Two other friends, Korieff and Contessa, men of high culture and genial spirit, met by Hitzig's suggestion, as if accidentally, at Hoffmann's lodgings one evening, where, after a conversation which made him forget his customary orgies, a proposition was made, as prearranged by the visitors, that they should come together in the same way one evening every week, for conversation and the reading and criticising of some composition which one of the four was to furnish for the common entertainment. It was a meeting partly literary and partly social, after the fashion of the *Decameron* or of Tieck's *Phantasus,* and was named after the day when the friends first met, which in the Polish calendar

was sacred to Saint Serapius. In this, as in other of his works, Hoffmann showed remarkable versatility, and it was this very quality which was to him one of his principal stumbling-blocks, preventing him, notwithstanding his genius, from rising to eminence in any of his several vocations.

In the spring of 1820 Hoffmann was cheered by a letter from Beethoven, whom he knew only through his works, for he had never met or written to the great composer. The modesty of this little missive is very pleasing, and the sending of it is a proof of the high estimation in which Hoffmann was held. The following is a copy:

Vienna, March 23, 1820.

I seize the opportunity afforded by Herr N. of approaching a man of such genius as yours. Concerning my littleness also you have written, and our Herr N. showed me in his album some lines from you concerning me. You, therefore, I must suppose, take some interest in me. Allow me to say that this, from one like you, a man of such distinguished endowments, is very gratifying. I wish you all that is beautiful and good, and I am, with high esteem, your Wellborn's most devoted. BEETHOVEN.

In the same year appeared the first volume of *Kater Murr's Lebensansichten*. The hero is an imaginary character, a musician, by name Kreissler, in whom the author has depicted his own aspirations and feelings, his humor and his experiences. It is, in short, a reflection of himself, and was, therefore, the work on which, of all his productions, he set the highest value. The last, but unwritten one of the three volumes, was to have shown the unfortunate musician driven to insanity by the shattered illusions and disappointments of life, and

was to have closed, by way of a supplement, with *Lucid Intervals of a Mad Musician.*

Final Sickness.

Meanwhile, Hoffmann's tavern orgies continued unabated, and his health at last gave way. On his forty-fifth birthday, the 24th of January, 1822, he saw his best and oldest friends, including Hitzig and Hippel, assembled round his table, but he himself was sick, no longer dispensing hospitality in person, as had been his custom, but confined to his chair, and drinking water while his friends drank wine. It was death that lay upon him, and a mournful, lingering death. The disease was tabes dorsalis; limb by limb from his feet upward, for five months, his body stiffened and died. Hoffmann bore his sufferings with astonishing gayety; so long as his hands had power he continued writing; then he dictated to an amanuensis; and four of his tales, the last one being *The Enemy,* discontinued only a few days before he died, were composed in this melancholy season. He would not believe that he was dying, and longed for life with an inexpressible desire. On the evening of the 24th of June his whole body to the neck had become stiff and powerless, so that he no longer felt any pain. This he interpreted as a sign of recovery, and said to the doctor: "I shall soon be through, now." "Yes," said the doctor, with quite another meaning, "you will soon be through." Next morning he was evidently dying; yet about eleven o'clock he woke from his stupor, cried that he was well and would go on dic-

tating *The Enemy* that night, at the same time calling on his wife to read to him the passage where he had stopped. She spoke to him in kind dissuasion; he was silent; he motioned to be turned toward the wall; and scarcely had this been done when the death-rattle was heard in his throat, and a moment later Hoffmann was no more.

Fouqué.

Another distinguished member of the Romantic school, Baron Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué, was of French extraction, but noted for the true Germanism of his character, both as a writer and as a man, and ranked for many years among the most popular and productive authors of that country. His family, expelled from France by the revocation of the edict of Nantes, appears to have settled at the Hague, from which this branch of it was transferred to Prussia by the fortunes of Friedrich's grandfather, whose property and title the baron inherited. The first Friedrich, born in the early part of the eighteenth century, had been sent in boyhood to the court of Anhalt Dessau, in the character of page; but he soon quitted this station; entered the Prussian army as a volunteer; by merit or recommendation was gradually advanced; and became acquainted with the prince royal, then a forlorn, oppressed and discontented youth, but destined afterward to astonish and convulse the world under the title of Frederick the Great.

Friedrich, the author, was born on the 11th of February, 1777. Of his early history or habits we have

no account, except that he was educated by a succession of tutors, including August Hülse, who did much to encourage his literary tastes. Entering the army as an officer in the Royal Guards, he served in this capacity during his nineteenth year, in the disastrous campaign of the Rhine. One of his brother officers and intimates at this time was Heinrich von Kleist, a noble-minded and ill-fated man of genius, whom the mismanagement of a too impetuous and feeling heart drove to suicide before he had fulfilled the bright promise of his early years.

The misfortunes of his country drove Fouqué back into retirement; while Prussia languished in hopeless degradation under the iron sway of France, he kept himself apart from military life, settled in the country, and, hanging up his ineffectual sword, devoted himself to domestic cares and joys, and in the kingdom of Imagination sought refuge from the aspect of actual oppression and distress. Of a temper susceptible, lively and devout, his faculties had been quickened by communion with kindred minds, and still more by collusion with the vast events which had filled the world with astonishment, and his portion of it with darkness and obstruction.

At this juncture, while contemplating a literary life, it was doubtless of no small influence on his future efforts that he became acquainted with August Wilhelm Schlegel. By Schlegel he was introduced to the study of Spanish poetry, a fact from which a skillful theorizer might plausibly enough deduce his whole psychological history; for it seems as if the beautiful and wondrous

spirit of this literature, so fervent yet so joyful, so solemn yet so full of blandishment, with its warlike piety and gay, chivalrous pomp, had taken entire possession of his mind, and molded his unsettled powers into the form which they ever afterward retained.

Literary Success.

Fouqué published his first works under the pseudonym of Pellegrin; he translated Cervantes' drama of *Numancia;* he wrote *Alwin, The History of Ritter Galmy;* and a small volume of *Dramatic Tales* was published for him by his friend Schlegel. These performances are all of a chivalry cast; attempts to body forth the sentiment with which the author's mind was almost exclusively pervaded. Their success was incomplete; sufficient to indicate their object, but not to attain it. The models which he had in view seem still to have awed and overshadowed his poetic faculty; his productions have a southern exotic aspect, and, in the opinion of his critics, it is only in glimpses that a genuine inspiration can be discerned in them. *The Sigurd,* grounded on the story of the *Niebelungen Lied,* and one of a collection which appeared in 1818, was the first performance sent forth in his own name, and also the first which showed his genius in its own form, or produced any impression on the public. This work was acknowledged to be of true northern growth; it found applauding readers, and had the honor to be criticised by Jean Paul Friedrich Richter, who bestowed on the poet the surname of the Valiant, in allusion to the quality which

seemed to be the soul of his own character, and of the characters which he portrayed. Meanwhile he had given to the stage his *Falk* and *Reh,* which, though not a pronounced success from a popular standpoint, was the commendation of such men as August Schlegel.

The ground thus gained Fouqué was not negligent to make good and extend. After the date of his first appearance, year after year duly added its tribute of volumes to the list of his works; he wrote in verse and prose, in narrative and representation, his productions varying in form through all the extremes of variety, but animated by the same spirit, that of knighthood and of religion. On the whole, he seems to have continued growing in esteem, both with the lower and upper classes of the literary world. In 1811 appeared his play of *Eginhard and Emma* and his chivalric romance, *Der Zauberring.* His *Zauberring* was translated into English, as also were his *Sintram* and his *Undine.* The last became a literary pet in its own country, being dandled not only by the soft hands of poetical maidens, but even by the horny paws of Recensents, a class of beings to the full as dire and doughty as our modern reviewers. *Undine* and *Sintram* are parts of a series or circuit of "Romantic fictions," entitled the *Seasons,* which were published successively at different periods.

Military Service.

The poet was by this time wedded to his second wife, the widow of von Rochow, his first union proving un-

happy and ending in divorce. We may now picture him as well content in his own Arcadian seclusion; for his lady was a woman of kindred genius, and had added new celebrity to his name by various writings, partly of her own, partly in concert with her husband. In 1813 his poetic leisure was interrupted by the clang of battle-trumpets. Napoleon's star had begun to decline, and Prussia rose as one man, to break asunder the fetters with which he had so long chained Europe to the dust. The knightly baron was the first to rouse himself at the call of his country; he again girded on his harness and took the field at the head of a small band of volunteers. His little troop would seem to have joined with the Jager, or Chasseur regiment of Brandenburg cuirassiers, in which he served, first as lieutenant, then as Rittmeister, with the devout and fervid gallantry which he had so often previously delineated in his writings. Like the lamented Körner, he stood by the cause both with his lyre and sword. His arm was ever in the hottest of the battle, and his songs uplifted the triumph of victory or breathed fresh ardor into the hearts of his comrades in defeat. These lyrical effusions have since been collected and published, and for the future historian they will form an interesting memorial. At Culm the poetical soldier was wounded, but the incompleteness of his cure did not prevent him from appearing in his place on the great day of Leipsic, and thenceforward following the scattered enemy to the banks of the Rhine. Here ill health, arising from excessive exertions, forced him to return; he had toiled faithfully till the struggle was decided, and could now

with a quiet mind leave others to complete the task. By the king he was raised to the rank of major, and decorated with the cross of the order of St. John. He retired to his former residence at Rathenau, betook himself again to writing, with unabated diligence, and produced, among various other chivalry performances of greater or smaller extent, a collection of plays and an epic poem entitled *Corona,* celebrating the events at which he himself was present and took part. Here he continued to reside, enjoying an enviable lot; the domestic society of a virtuous and gifted wife, the exercise of a poetic genius, which his brethren freely acknowledged, and still dearer honors as a man and citizen, such as his own conscience declared him to have merited.

The Man and His Works.

In mental structure Fouqué was not a man of strong original genius. His intellect was not greatly richer or more powerful than that of common minds, nor his insight into the world and into men's hearts more keen; but his feelings were finer, and the touih of an aerial fancy gave life and loveliness to his other powers. Among English authors we might liken him to Southey; though their provinces were widely diverse, and in regard to general culture and acquirement the latter must be reckoned greatly his superior. Like Southey, he finds more readily than he invents; and his invention, when he does trust it, is apt to be daring rather than successful. Yet his extravagant fictions are pervaded by a true sentiment; a soft, vivifying soul looks through

them; a religious submission, a cheerful and unwearied patience in affliction; mild, earnest hope and love, and peaceful, subdued enthusiasm.

To these internal endowments Fouqué adds the merit of a style by no means ill adapted for displaying them. Lightness and simplicity are its chief characteristics; his periods move along in lively rhythm, studiously excluding all pomp of phraseology, expressing his strongest thoughts in the humblest words, and veiling dark sufferings or resolute purposes in a placid smile. A faint superficial gayety seems to rest over all his images; it is not merriment or humor, but the self-possession of a man too earnestly serious to be heedful of solemn looks; and it plays like sunshine on the surface of a dark pool, deepening by contrast the impressiveness of the gloom which it does not penetrate.

Great as was Fouqué's popularity, he had the misfortune to outlive it. As a disciple of the Schlegels he became one of the foremost representatives of the Romantic school; so that his volumes were in every German household, and people waited eagerly at the libraries for his newest work. But presently came the change in literary taste which shelved the writings of the Romantic school, and among them most of Fouqué's. Of those which have survived are the *Zauberring* and the romance of *Undine,* the latter ranking as his masterpiece. In these, as in other of his works, readers who look for depth of thought or highly-wrought passion will be disappointed; but if they desire the graceful, the romantic, the beautiful, there it is in abundance. They will find a beauty and simplicity of style unsurpassed

UNDINE AND NEREID

After an original painting by W. Kray

Hail, great spirit of the waters, hail!
Lo! we thy subjects hither sail,
From every river, lake or brook
We our osier-beds forsook.

FOUQUE'S UNDINE, ADAPTED BY STOANE.

in the German language; plots, light and airy, laid in scenes of opal hue; for Fouqué aimed at ethereal beauty, delighted in word-painting, and flitted continually between the glories of a crimson Spanish sunset and the cold steel-blue of a German nightfall. There is in his works plenty of sweet pathos, of a kind which may wet the eye but never wrings the heart; there is also a truly German love of the weird and supernatural; but their special characteristic is their pure, chivalrous tone—"an ideal of Christian knighthood" it has been aptly termed.

Though once the favorite novelist of the Fatherland, with a lengthy list of publications extending from 1817 to 1841, to say nothing of his posthumous works, Fouqué now lives only in his *Undine*, the most pleasing and unaffected of his works. In Robertson's *History of German Literature* it is described as "the story of a water-sprite without a soul. Undine can, however, obtain a soul by a marriage with a mortal, and a knight, Huldebrand von Ringstetten, loves her and marries her. Her uncle, Kühleborn, is determined to lure her back to her native element, and with his aid a certain Berthalda estranges Huldebrand's love from his unearthly wife. Undine returns to her kinsfolk, but on the day that Huldebrand marries Berthalda she returns and kills him with a kiss. Although Fouqué's style is not free from mannerisms, he is able to endow miraculous occurrences with a peculiar naïve charm which at once wins the reader's sympathy. Unfortunately, however, in almost all his work there is an excess of the supernatural, to which he turns for a solution of every

pyschological difficulty; his ability to make character the source of motive and action was hardly superior to that of his predecessors in the 'Sturm and Drang.' "

Fouqué appears to have done his best work after his second marriage—with Frau von Rochow, better known as Caroline, Baroness de la Motte, herself an authoress of no little celebrity. Retiring to his wife's family estate about the age of twenty-five, after serving in Weimar's cuirassiers and being honorably discharged from military service, he then set vigorously to work, devoting himself to the study of Italian and Spanish, and bringing out his first work, the *Dramatische Spiele*, under his nom de plume of Pellegrin. This he termed a "Schoolwork;" but published as it was under the auspices of the Schlegels, it brought him such popularity that his works, both in the field of drama and romance, were thenceforth eagerly sought after, and won for him many admirers.

CONSCIENCE.

A TRAGEDY.

FROM THE GERMAN OF AUGUST WILHELM IFFLAND.

(*Translated by Benjamin Thompson.*)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

WEHRMAN, in Office Under Government.
TALLAND.
LEWIS, his Son, Secretary to Wehrman.
RATHING, Talland's Son-in-law and an Advocate.
BOLFELD, Comptroller of the Customs.
ELLOF, an Emigrant Farmer.
HENRY, Talland's Servant.

MRS. RATHING, Talland's Daughter.
FREDERICA SOLTAU.
MISS BOLFELD, Sister of Bolfeld and Talland's Housekeeper.

PRELUDE.

Iffland's *Conscience* is one of his best stories of domestic life, full of effective scenes and with a powerful dénouement, where Talland, after concealing a will which takes away all that had been left to him by his friend Soltau in a former document, at length confesses his crime and makes reparation with his life, the property going to Frederica, Soltau's daughter and the most attractive female character in the play. The dialogue drags somewhat in parts, but there is much of pathos, and there are several clever situations, which make amends for minor defects.

ACT I.

SCENE.—A room in Rathing's house.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Rathing.

Rathing.—I see your brother coming. Speak seriously to him, I beseech you. His dissatisfaction with your father, his attachment to high life and his consequent distance toward us all daily increase.

Mrs. Rathing.—Alas, too true!—Perhaps he may feel still more uneasy at the alteration of my father's looks. His friends now scarcely recognize him.

Rath.—I fear—but see, your brother comes. I will withdraw, for I should say too much, and rather hurt than support our intentions. (Exit.)

Enter Lewis.

Lewis.—(Throws his hat on the table.) What a life do we lead at home!

Mrs. R.—Has anything particular happened?

Lew.—No. All goes on as usual.—My father is insufferable.

Mrs. R.—The poor man——

Lew.—Was worth six thousand dollars before he inherited, from a stranger whom he had obliged, thirty thousand more, since which time he has accustomed himself to eat half as much as is necessary and to make himself miserable from morning to night.

Mrs. R.—The fortune which he inherited has, indeed, afforded him little gratification.

Lew.—Because he——

Mrs. R.—(With warmth.) Because his feelings are of a nature so delicate that we must respect them.

Lew.—Very delicate feelings he must have, truly, who, when in possession of a large fortune, can suffer his children to be in want.

Mrs. R.—My husband and I do not complain.

Lew.—But in what a miserable style do you live? No. Other means must be adopted. Such is the opinion of Mr. Wehrman, too—and he is our friend. Were our father poor, we ought to submit patiently, but with such a fortune——

Mrs. R.—Does he not live in a still more frugal way than any of us?

Lew.—Yes—and his old housekeeper in a more extravagant way than any of us.

Mrs. R.—She attended on his deceased friend, who left him the thirty thousand dollars. Is it not, therefore, natural that he should behave well to her?

Lew.—He will at last, perhaps, behave so well as to prove his gratitude by marrying her.

Mrs. R.—Lewis, Lewis!

Lew.—I suspect the worst, when I daily observe how gen-

erous he is toward other people—how niggardly toward his children.

Mrs. R.—Your dissatisfaction makes everything worse than it really is.

Lew.—He was more generous toward us before he obtained this large fortune. Our home was then the abode of cheerfulness, and he gratified all our wishes. There was not a more affectionate father in the world, or one who every moment convinced his children so completely that they were his sole delight. No sooner did his friend die, and he become possessed of thousands, than avarice and misery took possession of the house, and no one was allowed any control but the infernal housekeeper.

Mrs. R.—I still revere my father, and though often obliged to exert my patience, I will, nevertheless, repay the sincere affection which so often appears through his melancholy like a sunbeam through a cloud.—Lewis, it may be in our power to learn the cause of his sorrow by persuasion, but far be it from us to attempt to learn it by compulsion.

Lew.—My heart agrees to this, but my reason asks whether I can learn to live without eating, and if I can, whether I ought to do it, for the purpose of gratifying a whim.—I must live.

Mrs. R.—You live in——

Lew.—I involve myself in debt. Is it more proper that I should remain the prey of usurers, and at last lose all credit, than that I should request my father to spare me a portion of his superfluous wealth?

Mrs. R.—You lose your credit more by your conduct than your debts.

Lew.—What part of my conduct displeases you?

Mrs. R.—Were I to mention nothing else, your intimacy with Wehrman——

Lew.—Does he not visit your house daily?

Mrs. R.—I allow that he does, and my motive for not declining the acquaintance is that I may discover his intentions. He is our father's enemy. He never will forget that, when persuaded by the artifices of a base woman, to whom he was

attached, he was guilty of injustice, and that his partiality —his refusal of the orphan's just claims, were proved by our father. The business was taken out of his hands and transferred to the man who convicted him, whereby the injured obtained redress.

Lew.—With far too much exultation.

Mrs. It.—The exultation was not on the part of our father, but of the redressed.—Do you think Wehrman will ever pardon this?

Lew.—Yet he seems pleased in every opportunity of visiting you.

Mrs. R.—He exasperates you against our father, and attempts to convince me, too, that——

Lew.—He sees our father's folly in the same light that everybody sees it. No. He is my friend—my sincere friend. Through him I have been introduced to the world.

Mrs. R.—Alas! The world, as you call it——

Lew.—Would you have me always stay at home?

Mrs. R.—You aim at the talent of feeling at home when in splendid parties. Of what advantage can this be to one of your rank, which is inferior to theirs?

Lew.—Why not? Might not your husband remain an honest man, and yet raise himself by his talents above the sphere of middle rank?

Mrs. R.—You always make references to other people.

Lew.—And you never, though they interfere with what is your own right. Miss Bolfeld lives luxuriously, while we are starving.

Mrs. R.—Overlook this one unaccountable weakness in our father, for the sake of his numerous virtues.

Lew.—How am I to pay my debts?

Mrs. R.—Were you obliged to incur them?

Lew.—If you be satisfied with the life you lead, affection forbids that I should by my observations disturb your tranquillity. But be equally just toward me, and do not attempt to confine my extensive plans and hopes within a narrow circle. Act as you please in your own behalf. I can extricate myself.

Mrs. R.—In what way?

Lew.—By appealing to the affection and understanding of my father. If in the midst of riches he will starve, it will hurt me, but I cannot help it; me he must at least assist, unless he wishes to think as ill of himself as the world already thinks of him. I know what I may become, and what I will become, if I have a father who deserves the name. (Exit.)

Reënter Rathing.

Rathing.—Your advice has been fruitless, I fear.

Mrs. R.—Dear, good William, how many cares do I heap upon you!

Rath.—A sympathy with virtue is not care. It animates the faculties and exalts the whole man.

Mrs. R.—When you married me, you were justified in the expectation of a considerable portion, instead of which you only receive the interest of my share in my mother's small fortune.

Rath.—When I solicited your hand I thought not of your portion. With sincerity I can declare that every enjoyment which I anticipated I have richly found in the possession of Maria.

Mrs. R.—But so few conveniences of life——

Rath.—These we shall obtain in old age.—Manhood is the time for action.—We sow at present, and, believe me, we shall one day reap.

Mrs. R.—I do believe you. But forgive me if I mention what I, perhaps, ought to conceal. It grieves me to behold men of your age, whose pretensions and whose intellects are far more limited, filling honorable offices and enjoying the emoluments of them, while you renounce them, and withdraw from the world, that you may live for me and my relations.

Rath.—By no means——

Mrs. R.—That you may by your mode of life accommodate yourself to the peculiarities of my father.—It is a kindness which I cannot silently accept, feeling, as I do, its full value.

Rath.—You value it at too high a rate! My own inclination in some degree leads me to this mode of life. I do not like the society of the world, and should feel all the horrors of ennui, were I obliged to frequent the innumerable rapid routs of the great. My humble meal at our little table is far preferable to a banquet.—I do not apply for any office, because the consciousness of diligence and honesty makes a man as good a character as the state can boast, and domestic tranquillity as happy a one.

Mrs. R.—(Embraces him.) Dear, good William!

Rath.—Yet I have a care, which you can remove.

Mrs. R.—Oh, name it.

Rath.—Wehrman comes too often hither, and I perceive that he is pleased with your society. As to any jealousy on my part, I trust you think me incapable of it.—We know each other and feel the value of each other.

Mrs. R.—We do, indeed.

Rath.—I perceive that you do not object to his visits at my house merely because you hope through his interest to ameliorate the situation of your brother and myself.

Mrs. R.—He has given me cause to hope for his assistance.

Rath.—I thank you for your good intentions and do not doubt his, but I wish not to be promoted in such a way. Besides, his views do not suit our humble mode of life. He is a man of the world, who wishes rather to appear possessed of sense than feeling, and who knows how to make all his humors and desires wear the appearance of deliberate reflection. Such a man as this can never bring peace or happiness into a family—and I know no happiness but peace. Such a man can never bear to see another satisfied with mediocrity. He thinks this a prejudice which ought to be opposed, undermined and destroyed, and it is much sooner destroyed than restored.

Mrs. R.—I will decline his visits.

Rath.—Not in an abrupt way—but by degrees.

Mrs. R.—I understand you. I must, however, mention that his politeness and sympathy have ever appeared equal, and

that he has never trespassed beyond the bounds of that propriety which is sanctioned by friendship.

Rath.—Perhaps he never will. I repeat that I think him better than he wishes to appear. But for this very reason he compels us to treat him according to his appearance.

Enter Bolfeld.

Bolfeld.—Your servant. My name is Bolfeld.

Rath.—May I inquire your business, sir?

Bol.—In a private conversation with you I will explain it. (Mrs. R. courtesies and is going.) But, no. Stay, madam, stay. What I have to mention relates to your father.

Rath.—Be seated, sir.

Bol.—I don't choose it.

Rath.—As you please. Proceed, then.

Bol.—Well—you know that my sister lives in the capacity of housekeeper at Mr. Talland's house. The poor creature used to wait upon the late Mr. Soltau, and was transferred, with the property, to your father.

Mrs. R.—Who treats her as if she were a relative.

Bol.—Mercy on us! What do you mean?

Rath.—What do you mean, sir?

Bol.—Is not the old gentleman a grumbling, avaricious——

Mrs. R.—Does she complain of his avarice?

Bol.—In a word, he may soon, perhaps, quit this world, and it is, therefore, natural to ask what reward my poor silly sister is to expect for her faithful services and attention to the strange old curmudgeon?

Rath.—Use more becoming expressions, sir.

Bol.—Has he declared what she is to have? I must know how much.

Rath.—I don't interfere with my father-in-law's will.

Bol.—But you would like to read it, I suppose. A dead father-in-law is the best father-in-law—eh?

Mrs. R.—I can stay no longer. (Exit.)

Bol.—Mercy on us! What a tender-hearted daughter!

Rath.—To the point, sir. In what respect does my father-in-law's will concern you?

Bol.—In a very material respect. I am my sister's heir, and she will probably not marry—or, at least, I shall advise her to remain single. She is, to be sure, younger than I am, but she will doubtless depart before me, for she is of a choleric disposition and is troubled with an asthmatic complaint in the spring. Now, should this take her off—why, of course, I step forward to claim her property.

Rath.—Well—and what is this to me?

Bol.—I want you to manage matters in such a way as that—that—that some sum may be fixed—some recompense, I mean, for the poor silly creature's attendance.

Rath.—No more, sir.

Bol.—If you wish to import a trifling quantity of wine—coffee—silk—I am comptroller of the customs—carry the goods to the right—I'll look to the left.

Rath.—Paltry—— Begone, sir.

Bol.—You will not, then?—Well—my sister and I must go to the old fellow himself, and see what we can do with him.

Rath.—You are capable of attempting anything, no doubt.

Bol.—Yes, and succeeding in anything. Ha! Ha! Ha! My sister says that ideas are free, but my ideas generally produce a heavy impost.—There are few men whose dealings may not be taxed.—Your servant—— But mercy on us, I had nearly forgotten a principal object of my visit. Pray, what do you think of your brother-in-law—young Talland—the secretary?

Rath.—Why do you ask this?

Bol.—He has paid attention to my daughter.

Rath.—The family never wisned him to do so.

Bol.—What says the old gentleman to it?

Rath.—I hope he is ignorant of it.

Bol.—Well—then, what think you?

Rath.—He is a young man and of a warm temperament—I think you a cautious father.

Bol.—Your ideas of me are correct. I have taken proper precautions—otherwise I should not have admitted him into the house.—My inquiries only arise from my surprise at not having seen him this week.

Rath.—Indeed!

Bol.—I hope he will conduct himself properly, for I am not to be jested with.

Rath.—How do you expect him to conduct himself?

Bol.—I expect him to keep his promise to marry the girl.

Rath.—(Astonished.) Has he promised this?

Bol.—He has.

Rath.—But without the knowledge and consent of his family.

Bol.—He is of age.

Rath.—Does it seem to you right that he should, without any reference——

Bol.—His references are not my concern.

Rath.—I must own, you astonish me.

Bol.—Why? My Sabina is a pretty girl.

Rath.—But I think——

Bol.—It is better not to think. For my own part, I have three objects at present in view, and the sooner one is obtained, the sooner can I proceed to the execution of the other two.—When I proceed I generally succeed.

Rath.—The matter requires consideration, at all events.

Bol.—By no means. Every man knows at once whether he will or will not do a thing. If he will not marry my daughter—why, I know how to act.

Rath.—I'll speak to his father and brother-in-law.

Bol.—That is proper—but I give notice—marry her he must, or pay dearly for his conduct.

Rath.—One ought not to be too soon alarmed.

Bol.—True, that has always been my maxim.—At what hour shall I receive an answer?

Rath.—How! You must, of course, conceive——

Bol.—I'll tell you what I conceive—that you wish to make

my daughter and myself appear to the world a couple of fools. Now, I never was thought a fool, and I never will be. I shall return for an answer in the course of to-day, and if that answer be not accordant to my wishes, your brother-in-law shall soon be known to the whole world for—— You understand me—marriage or money—play or pay. (Exit.)

Rath.—Unguarded young man! what has he done?

Enter Wehrman.

Wehrman.—Good-morning, my dear sir.

Rath.—Your servant, Mr. Wehrman.

Weh.—You seem agitated—this is unusual.

Rath.—No man is at all times on his guard.

Weh.—Of course, you, too, are at length displeased with the conduct of your father-in-law.

Rath.—Indeed I am not. My good father-in-law.

Weh.—Good! A man like you ought never to apply a word without a meaning to it.—Were your father-in-law good, times would be better with you and his son. He is a morose old man, who embitters your life and his own.

Rath.—Say not so, I beseech you.

Weh.—You will at least discover that nothing can be effected by mere submissive patience, and I have resolved to see you in a better situation.

Rath.—I feel truly obliged to you.

Weh.—My plan in your behalf wants nothing but your own assistance.

Rath.—Your goodness makes me feel ashamed. I have myself no plan, and do not wish that any other person should project one in my behalf.

Weh.—That is a fault. You should always be projecting plans. After many have failed one may at last succeed. You must be forwarded—but you yourself must assist in obtaining promotion. Frequent visits——

Rath.—Weary the patron.

Weh.—So much the better. The petitioner's request is at last granted, in order that his importunity may be avoided.

Rath.—I should be sorry to obtain any request on such terms.

Weh.—You may be truly useful to the state, but you conceal your virtues. When virtue wishes to be rewarded, she must become a coquette. A man of business ought to calculate at his desk as accurately how he is to shine as a lady at her toilet.

Rath.—I believe you are right—but I was not born to act thus.

Weh.—We are born as nothing, and may make ourselves everything. Apropos. Talking of ladies, I hope Mrs. Rathing is well.

Rath.—She is, sir, I thank you.

Weh.—She, too, must be introduced to the world. You both ought to occupy higher stations. A place is at present vacant which will suit you.—I have mentioned your name.—Make application.—I am sure you will be successful.

Rath.—(Bows.) I must see.

Weh.—You must act. Be not so proud as to neglect yourself. I will assist you as far as I can, and thereby avenge myself on your father-in-law. He has almost ruined my credit, and I intend in return to make him an affectionate father to his children.

Rath.—Your words are as smooth as your thoughts, but the smoothest steel cuts deepest.—Is it not a thankless office to serve people against their inclination?

Weh.—Who requires thanks?—I want to serve myself by serving you. The conduct of your father-in-law has cost me many a sleepless night. Mine be the game and yours the gain.

Rath.—I am firmly resolved never to accept anything on such terms, and seriously beg you will desist from your purpose.

Enter Talland.

Talland.—Good-morning, my son. (Bows to Wehrman.)

Weh.—Well, Mr. Talland, how fares it? Still gloomy and dejected?

Tal.—(Looks solemnly at him.) Did you sleep well last night, Mr. Wehrman?

Weh.—(Smiling.) I am, at all events, in very good spirits this morning.

Tal.—Such a man as you cannot be so without reason.

Weh.—I'll just pay my respects to Mrs. Rathing. You, gentlemen, may, in the meantime, shrug your shoulders at me. (Exit.)

Rath.—You are well, sir, I hope?

Tal.—Rid yourself of that man.

Rath.—We are devising the means of doing it.

Tal.—He corrupts my son.

Rath.—My dear sir, you must absolutely endeavor to raise your spirits.

Tal.—My spirits are always better when I come hither.

Rath.—Go to some watering-place.

Tal.—It would be too expensive.

Rath.—With your fortune——

Tal.—Mention not that.

Rath.—I really mention it only on your account.

Tal.—You are a good man—a very good man.

Rath.—You do not allow yourself even the conveniences of life. You do nothing to recruit your constitution, but suffer it gradually to decay.

Tal.—Yes, yes—sometimes I allow myself——

Rath.—You even forfeit your breakfast.

Tal.—(Confused.) Who told you this?

Rath.—Forgive your children, if affection urged them to inquire.

Tal.—My breakfast—did not agree with me—for that reason——

Rath.—(Grasps his hand.) For that reason?—For that reason only?

Tal.—Leave me as I am.

Rath.—Your goodness toward others is unceasing. It is only toward yourself you are unjust.

Tal.—If I but act justly toward you I am satisfied.

Rath.—Dear sir!

Tal.—There is the amount of interest due to you. (Rathing takes it and bows.) It is but little, yet do not bear ill-will against me, children. I—I can do no more for you.

Rath.—Do we evince any expectation for more?

Tal.—No—oh, no. The other property—which I inherited——

Rath.—Let us not speak of that.

Tal.—Old Soltau had legal heirs—I did not deserve it—I ought not to have accepted it.

Rath.—Of late you have often mentioned this subject. Follow the impulse of your heart and bestow a considerable sum on the heir of your late friend.

Tal.—His two nephews are dead.

Rath.—Indeed!

Tal.—(With tremulous utterance.) They are dead.

Rath.—Are you sure of this?

Tal.—I am. They fell in the field of battle, to which despair had led them.

Rath.—May not inclination——

Tal.—Oh, no, no, no! (Throws himself into a chair.)

Rath.—(After a pause.) His niece is still alive.

Tal.—True.

Rath.—Act toward her as you are no longer able to act toward her brothers.

Tal.—(Surveys him awhile, rises and grasps his hand.) I will.

Rath.—The sooner the better.

Tal.—She is in service.

Rath.—Take her into your house.

Tal.—Right, right! Your advice accords exactly with my feelings. She is poor, but virtuous, and I am told she possesses an enlightened mind.

Rath.—Which she probably would not have possessed had she been rich.

Tal.—But what will the world say?

Rath.—It will revere you.

Tal.—Malice has already been industrious against me. Soltau's relations have always calumniated me.

Rath.—Disappointment and envy made them do so. Did you not offer them a present of five thousand dollars?

Tal.—I did, and they refused it. They would have all or nothing. They said that I had obtained the will by fraudulent means. Should I now do anything for this girl—should I do much——

Rath.—Has not every one witnessed the purity of your conduct during forty years? Does not the gratitude of many relieved by you from wretchedness speak for your heart? Dear sir, have confidence in yourself.

Tal.—And if I act thus toward the girl, how am I acting toward my family?

Rath.—If there be one of us to whom your peace of mind is not dearer than wealth, that one does not deserve to be provided for.

Tal.—(After a pause.) I'll send for the girl. (Lays his hand on Rathing's shoulder.) Have patience with me.

Rath.—Your conscientious motives are a blessing to your children.

Tal.—I shall not long trouble you.

Rath.—Say not so, my father.

Enter Mrs. Rathing, with a basin.

Mrs. Rathing.—Good-morning, dear father.

Tal.—God bless you, Maria!

Mrs. R.—I have brought you some soup. I am so vain as to think that we make it more to your taste than at your own house.

Tal.—I understand you, my child. (Takes the basin and looks at them by turns.) You do wrong in supporting my weak frame. (They take his hat and stick, and he eats the soup.) I thank you—I thank you. God knows I have ever wished to make my children happy. If I have not succeeded, it was an error—a mournful error, and no one suffers more

for it than myself. God reward you, Maria! (Returns the basin to her, takes his hat and stick and shakes hands with them.) Good-morning. (Mrs. Rathing kisses his hand.)

Rath.—We shall see each other again to-day.

Tal.—Yes, but let it be here—for here I feel my only peace. (Draws a box from his pocket.) This is a plaything for your children.

Mrs. R.—I thank you. Will you not give it to them before you go? I'll bring them hither in a moment.

Tal.—No, Maria. My sorrowful countenance shall not damp their innocent enjoyments. Take it to them.—It is a palace, which they may put together.—Tell them it is my gift. (Mrs. Rathing wipes her eyes.) I must own I might have made a better choice.—A palace!—Return it to me It is not proper. (Takes the box again.) I'll buy them a cottage instead of it. Teach them to find delight in a humble sphere. (Kisses Mrs. Rathing.) Good-morning! (Shakes Rathing's hand.) Good-morning! (Exit, attended by them.)

ACT II.

SCENE.—A room in Talland's house. Mrs. Rathing is discovered, seated at a table.

Mrs. Rathing.—It is true that I am accustomed to patience, but Miss Bolfeld abuses it. How much longer must I wait for her?

Enter Henry.

Henry.—Miss Bolfeld will come.

Mrs. R.—Very well.

Hen.—(Bows and is going—stops at the door—and returns.) Alas, madame, what a house is this become? You know it, to be sure, in part—but still it is worse than you believe.

Mrs. R.—Be patient, Henry, be patient.

Hen.—I don't think of myself, madame, but I am sorry for my poor master. No one knows what the old maid makes him endure, and no one knows why he endures it.

Mrs. R.—Do everything that you can for him.

Hen.—That I will, but I can be of little service. Matters grow worse every day, and—only think, madame, she has lately sometimes locked herself in my master's study.

Mrs. R.—You must tell him this.

Hen.—Do you think so?—I am fearful, for her influence is unlimited. To be sure, I can't prove that she was guilty of anything blamable—but what had she to do in the study? (Sees Lewis, and exit.)

Enter Lewis.

Lewis.—What has brought you hither?

Mrs. R.—My wish to release you, if it be possible.

Lew.—Release me! from what?

Mrs. R.—From your thoughtless promise of marriage to Miss Bolfeld's niece.

Lew.—What promise? The people are mad. I never thought of such a thing.

Mrs. R.—Bolfeld asserts it.

Lew.—And I deny it.

Mrs. R.—I will speak to Miss Bolfeld on the subject.—Her brother is very determined.

Lew.—A blockhead! I marry his ugly, green-eyed wench, forsooth!

Mrs. R.—Heaven grant you may be able to avoid it.

Lew.—Has his daughter any written promise?

Mrs. R.—My husband is much distressed on your account.

Lew.—I pay my court to Mr. Wehrman's sister, and never thought of the other creature.

Enter Miss Bolfeld.

Miss Bolfeld.—Madame, I am very sorry that you have been obliged to wait, but, really, in such weather as this, one cannot sleep enough. I have a rheumatic pain in my shoulder, too.—Be seated, I beg. (Sits.) Will you take a little breakfast with one—coffee—chocolate?

Mrs. R.—I beg to be excused.

Lew.—What will you give me if I decline the offer, too?

Miss B.—I was speaking to your sister. (To Mrs. Rathing.) So you will not have anything? Well—Henry! My chocolate!—I am truly happy to see you, Mrs. Rathing. How happens it?—Do you want anything from our furniture?

Mrs. R.—Nothing whatever.

Lew.—Then you are welcome, no doubt. (Exit.)

Miss B.—Your brother is a hopeful youth, to be sure. (Henry brings the chocolate.) Put it on the table.—Now bring the table hither.—Close to me.—There!—Now go. (Exit Henry.) I don't know how you manage servants, Mrs. Rathing, but they are the plague of my life. Well, in what can I serve you?

Mrs. R.—Have the goodness to tell me, as far as you can, the relative situations of my brother and your niece.

Miss B.—That he has promised to marry her.

Mrs. R.—Do you really believe that?

Miss B.—Most certainly.

Mrs. R.—Do you think the connection proper?

Miss B.—Why not?

Mrs. R.—Even if your family were obliged to enforce it?

Miss B.—Do you wish matters to go so far?

Mrs. R.—At present I only wish to hear your opinion.

Miss B.—Promises must be performed.

Mrs. R.—But the alliance is not suitable.

Miss B.—Not suitable! Let me tell you, madame, the Bolfelds are an honest family.

Mrs. R.—That I do not deny.

Miss B.—And as good as other people, who fancy themselves such mighty great folks.

Mrs. R.—Miss Bolfeld!

Miss B.—Yes, and they have upright hearts, let me tell you, and will not allow anybody to behave ill to them. Do you understand me?

Mrs. R.—You will not understand me.

Miss B.—I'll tell you what, madame, I do understand you, and am not to be caught by your tricks.

Mrs. R.—(Rises.) This is insufferable.

Miss B.—So much the better. Why waste time in compliments? Tell your father, or the person who sent you, that the embassy has failed.

Mrs. R.—Yet you subsist on my father's charity.

Miss B.—I want no person's charity.

Mrs. R.—Then leave the house, and do not abuse what you do not need.

Miss B.—I am ready to go to-day, but ask your father if he will consent to it.

Mrs. R.—I have no doubt of it.

Miss B.—Try, then—ask your father, madame.—Ha! Ha! Ha!—I stand on firm ground.

Mrs. R.—Are you married to my father?

Miss B.—Heaven forbid!

Mrs. R.—Then I cannot comprehend——

Miss B.—Any more than other people.

Mrs. R.—Act as you please, but I assure you I will use every persuasion which can prevent this act of folly on the part of my brother.

Miss B.—Folly! What do you mean—eh? What do you mean, I say? Who am I—who is my brother—who is my niece—and who are you, your father and your brother all taken together, that you dare call an alliance with my family an act of folly? (Exit Mrs. Rathing.)

(Miss Bolfeld follows her.) We are honest, reputable people, and will teach your haughty family how to conduct itself even if we are ruined by it. (Returns.) An impertinent—proud—abusive woman! (Stamps violently.) But I'll be revenged. (Throws open the window.) Yes, madame, go home and tell your husband that I am a match for him and twenty advocates.—I'll face him and a score like him, I say. (Shuts the window.) She returns no answer.—She is in too great a passion to speak. Well, I am glad I have made her more angry than myself.—Attack me! I should like to see the person who can gain anything by attacking me.

Enter Frederica.

Frederica.—Can I speak to Mr. Talland?

Miss B.—No, he is not at home. What do you want with him?

Fre.—He sent for me.

Miss B.—Indeed! Everybody says the same thing, who wants to partake of his purse.

Fre.—I have no such wish.

Miss B.—Who are you, then?

Fre.—My name is Frederica Soltau.

Miss B.—Indeed! Sure!—Frederica——

Fre.—The name of Soltau must be familiar to you, madame, for my late uncle had a great regard for you.

Miss B.—And I exhibited great fidelity in his service—so his regard was justified by my fidelity—was it not, pert miss?

Fre.—Poor people are seldom pert, and that I am poor you know.

Miss B.—Your poverty is not my fault. I should not have cared if your uncle had left you his whole fortune.

Fre.—Of that I do not wish to speak.

Miss B.—Why did your father behave so ill that his brother, justly irritated, rather chose to leave his fortune to those who acted properly than to his relations? Mr. Talland compassionately offered you and the rest of you five thousand dollars, but you were too proud to accept it—so now you are reduced to poverty. Thus it is—arrogance precedes a fall.

Fre.—Very often.

Miss B.—Where have your brothers strolled to?

Fre.—They are dead.

Miss B.—Then they are provided for. You are in mourning for the fellows, I suppose?

Fre.—I am in mourning for my benefactors.

Miss B.—How do you earn your bread?

Fre.—By service.

Miss B.—That's right. Be humble and submissive, and all

may go well. Conduct yourself with propriety and modesty, and some honest footman may one day or other marry you.

Fre.—I'll come again, if you please. (Going.)

Miss B.—No. Here is Mr. Talland.

Enter Talland.

Talland.—Who is this? (Frederica courtesies.)

Miss B.—Soltau's niece.

Tal.—Welcome, welcome! Be seated. (Frederica declines it.) Leave us, Miss Bolfeld.

Miss B.—With your permission—it is more proper that I should stay.

Tal.—(After a moment's reflection.) Perhaps it may. (To Frederica.) Your brothers are dead, and you have lost their support. I heard so good an account of you that I wish to supply their place. I have adjusted matters with the family in whose service you are, and you may now, if you please, remain with me.

Miss B.—We want no more servants.

Tal.—Remain in my house as the unfortunate and respected niece of my friend, whose place I have undertaken to supply. You have nothing to do here but to be as happy as I can wish you.

Fre.—(Embarrassed.) Sir!

Miss B.—A pretty offer, on my conscience!

Fre.—Sir, I feel your kindness—and should rejoice at such an improvement in my situation—but the fear of being troublesome to you—makes me irresolute.

Miss B.—A fine sum of money it would cost!

Tal.—You will be a consolation, not a trouble, to me.

Fre.—Though reduced to a lower sphere, I have not forgotten the sentiments created by my former rank and education, therefore——

Tal.—You accept my proposal.

Miss B.—Your parents were not in the best situation, methinks.

Tal.—Peace! You are insufferable.

Fre.—Rather than be obliged to endure humiliation while I receive a favor, I will return to my late service.

Tal.—You shall remain with me, and, if you please, have no concern with any one but me.

Fre.—Your goodness affects me deeply. Such a man was worthy of my uncle's attachment. I reproach myself for any idea which I have hitherto harbored against you.—When you entered, your look, your tone of voice at once dispelled the opinion I had formed of you.

Tal.—(Takes her hand.) My dear child, I will——

Fre.—Oh, call me so. (Kisses his hand.) It is so long since I was addressed by that title——

Tal.—I will—fate has been unjust toward you. (Much affected.) I will repair this injustice.

Fre.—With filial gratitude I accept your kind offer. Believe me, I am incapable of abusing it.

Tal.—I am sure you are. Arrange your concerns and return as soon as possible.

Fre.—Heaven reward you for the happiness you bestow!

Miss B.—With permission—what am I?

Tal.—My housekeeper.

Miss B.—And when this beggar is admitted into the family, what shall I be?

Tal.—My housekeeper.

Miss B.—And what will she be?

Tal.—What she pleases.

Miss B.—And you really think of acting thus while I remain here?

Tal.—I wish it.

Miss B.—Then I'll tell you at once that if this girl dares to enter the house I'll walk out of it.

Tal.—What do you mean by this language? Have you forgotten that at Soltau's death I took you into my service from mere kindness, when you were in want of a place?

Miss B.—Ha! Ha! Ha! From mere kindness!—There was a little policy in it, too.

Tal.—Explain yourself.

Miss B.—Not at present.

Tal.—If you wish to end your days quietly, and to be provided for the purpose, I am ready——

Miss B.—No, sir. I know what I do. If you attempt to dimiss me from your house, you will find—what you don't expect.

Tal.—What do you want?

Miss B.—At present, nothing but that this girl may remain where she has been.

Tal.—That she shall not.

Miss B.—You may allow her an annual gratuity.

Tal.—No. She shall not remain in service—positively she shall not.

Miss B.—(Smiling.) Why are you so suddenly inclined to assist her?

Tal.—Because she is unfortunate.

Miss B.—That she has long been.

Tal.—Never so much as now—now that she has lost her brothers—her only support.

Miss B.—This is all nonsense. Play some other game.—It is better to be candid and open.

Tal.—I am so.

Miss B.—No. If you were candid and open, I might reason with you, but as you will not be so, I now declare that I know you hate me, but that you find me necessary and useful to you. Act as you ought to do—then you—your children and I shall gain by your conduct. But if you think proper to treat me as a cipher, I give you notice that I'll do the utmost, rather than submit to it. I have told you my resolution—now act as you please. (Exit.)

Tal.—(Raising his clasped hands.) Cursed—cursed moment!

Enter Wehrman.

Wehrman.—I only mean to detain you a few moments.

Tal.—What procures me this visit?

Weh.—You probably know that your son has for some time paid his addresses to my sister.

Tal.—Indeed, I do not.

Weh.—Well, the young man may have been backward in telling you, from a fear of not obtaining my consent. I am accustomed to doubt and suspicion from your family, but I wish to put you to the blush. Therefore, I am willing that the alliance shall take place, if——

Tal.—I must candidly tell you that I am averse to all alliances which can be so suddenly acceded to.

Weh.—But you, of course, will consent to——

Tal.—Besides which, my son's fortune gives him no claim to a connection with a lady of such brilliant prospects.

Weh.—Why has he not a claim, while he has a father who can advance a considerable sum for him?

Tal.—I can but advance his share of the interest of three thousand dollars—his mother's jointure.

Weh.—But it is known that Soltau's property——

Tal.—With respect to that property, I shall act according to my own inclination.

Weh.—Can your inclination lead you to anything detrimental to your children?

Tal.—Every father and every owner of an estate has a right to act by conviction.

Weh.—I am sorry to be under the necessity of remarking that every one is astonished at your conduct toward your children.

Tal.—My children know me and are satisfied. But is it not your opinion, Mr. Wehrman, that many people take great pains to make my children dissatisfied?

Weh.—I cannot be surprised if such be the case. No one can understand the motives for your conduct. You are thought harsh—opinions are circulated respecting you——

Tal.—Of course, of course.

Weh.—Which are very singular, for——

Tal.—Thus far—— Mr. Wehrman, enough!

Weh.—As it seems, then, that you object to the union, I shall forbid any further intercourse between your son and my sister.

Tal.—That I request.

Weh.—Yet I think the father who, without paying any regard to the merit of the object, can, even when old, devote himself to love, ought not so absolutely to condemn this sensation in his son.

Tal.—I beg no more may be said on this subject.

Weh.—At one time you took care that the world should say enough of me. Why am I now to be silent?

Tal.—I only did my duty.

Weh.—And I am doing mine. I grant that revenge is the impulse by which I am guided. But even my revenge gives way when I can promote the happiness of others.—I do not like you, but even if I did, even if you had been my friend instead of my enemy, how could I act more properly than when I endeavor to procure for your children what is sacrificed to a harlot?—On her you squander your money, while your daughter wants the common necessaries of life and your son is the prey of usurers.

Tal.—Is my son in debt?

Weh.—Of course. You compel him to be so.

Tal.—I will relieve him as far as I can.

Weh.—That is the way to appease me.

Tal.—Whose business is this but our own? Who are you, that you dare——

Weh.—A man—an injured man—one who requires private satisfaction or open war.

Tal.—War you may find, disgraceful as it is on your part to enter the lists against an old man.

Weh.—Disgraceful! I thank you for the warning. I go to collect my forces, and shall return triumphant—till then all overtures of peace are needless. (Slowly walks to him, and says, in a solemn tone:) Mr. Talland, you are on every side surrounded. Think of an honorable capitulation. (Exit.)

Tal.—What an enemy have I created. Discontented with my own conduct, I became rigid against others, and now this rigor falls upon myself. What shall I do? What can I do? —Oh, God, end my days—and soon—soon!——

Enter Miss Bolfeld.

Miss Bolfeld.—Have you sent for more beggars to inhabit this house?

Tal.—What do you want? (Half aside.) In hell there cannot be a greater torment.

Miss B.—There's an old vagabond without, who has brought his bundle into the house, as if he belonged to it.

Enter Ellof.

Ellof.—Brother!—God bless you!

Miss B.—Have you a brother?

Tal.—Whom have I the honor——

Ell.—There is very little honor in the case. I only wish there may be some pleasure.

Tal.—Who are you?

Ell.—Him whom intimacy once induced you to call brother. I am grown old, yet surely you recollect me.

Tal.—I must own——

Ell.—I do not read in your countenance a wish to know me.

Tal.—But, tell me——

Ell.—That is what I did not wish, for when I have declared who I am, I shall probably be welcomed—for to-night. Well—well! I meant to reside here—but no matter! Instead of residence I shall have a night's lodging.—I beg pardon for reminding you of the term brother, and now introduce myself as your school-fellow. I am a fugitive—my name Ellof.

Tal.—(Astonished.) Ellof!—Merciful Heavens!

Ell.—Ellof, whom the sword and party-spirit have driven from his house.

Tal.—My good—my worthy Ellof. (Presses him to his heart.)

Miss B.—(Aside.) Mercy on us! An emigrant!

Tal.—How came you hither?

Ell.—On foot, with little money, but much confidence.—"Talland," thought I, "always had a regard for me.—I'll go, and if he be still alive, ask him for a bed. As for the rest, my head or my hands will procure it." With this idea I tied my bundle, bade adieu to my plundered farm, and find—what?

Tal.—A friend—a brother! (Embraces him.)

Ell.—God be praised! To him I consign the care of my flocks and fields, from which the enemy has driven me.—Your hand! I see the tear of joy in your eye.—I am happy.—Now introduce me to your wife.

Tal.—I am a widower.

Ell.—(Pointing to Miss Bolfeld.) But——

Tal.—Miss Bolfeld, my housekeeper.

Ell.—Bolfeld—Bol—Zounds! Catherine!—Yes!—Catherine Bolfeld! My old playfellow! How are you? How are you?—You and I have often knocked our heads against each other at blind-man's-buff. (Takes her hand.) Catherine! Catherine! You are grown old.

Miss B.—(Drawing her hand away.) Sir——

Ell.—Pshaw! Never mind that! I am grown old, too.—It is many years since we were children. (Takes a chair.) Well, comrade, how are you?

Tal.—Old, very old.

Ell.—Pshaw, pshaw! Though you are a widower, you have somebody to bind your temples when you have the headache.—Eh, Catherine?

Miss B.—Upon my word—— Sir, I'd have you to know my reputation is not to be slandered. (Exit.)

Tal.—She is only my housekeeper.

Ell.—But one of the ruling sort, I suppose. When I entered the house, she addressed me with a voice as shrill as if she had whistled through a keyhole. I could not bear to have such a creature near me.

Tal.—Custom.

Ell.—How horrid are your looks! Cheer up, cheer up, friend!

Tal.—I like you, Ellof.

Ell.—But I don't like you.

Tal.—Perhaps you may exhilarate me.

Ell.—I, who have left everything behind me, am cheerful and merry, while you, who are a man of fortune, sink into despondency. Shame on you!

Tal.—Come, let me show you your chamber.

Ell.—And a breakfast——

Tal.—Of course.

Ell.—But tell me—for I must know how to act—are you governed by this hag?

Tal.—I am accommodating, from custom, and a love of peace.

Ell.—That means I am grown very old. Should you like to be young again?

Tal.—Alas, no, no, no.

Ell.—Well—a breakfast I must have before I say any more. Hungry people are not fit for a consultation.—Come. (Exeunt.)

Enter Lewis and Wehrman.

Lewis.—How!—My father positively refused his consent to my marriage with your sister?

Wehrman.—Most positively.

Lew.—Yet he is not apt to destroy the happiness of others. What reason did he assign for his refusal?

Weh.—None.

Lew.—I must submit.

Weh.—That would I not.

Lew.—But what can I do, without losing my own good opinion?

Weh.—Speak to him as your duty and his direct.

Lew.—Can I mention his fortune without appearing to encroach upon his rights?

Weh.—Mention me. Say that I have made you aware of a conduct which approaches toward disinheritance.—Persist till you obtain some explanation.

Lew.—It must be so. I will.

Weh.—Do not suffer the torpidity of your relatives to infect you. Establish your own fortune, and remove the obstructions which surround the old man, that he himself may breathe more freely. You are one of the few who do not misunderstand me. Attend to my advice. (Exit.)

Enter Rathing.

Rathing.—Has Mr. Wehrman been with you?

Lew.—Yes.

Rath.—Be on your guard.

Lew.—Against my only friend?

Rath.—Against the enemy of yourself—of me—of us all—of himself.

Lew.—Why do you think him our enemy?

Rath.—Because his mind is incapable of understanding what is felt by such a heart as your father's. If you feel any filial affection, do not listen to Wehrman.

Lew.—That no one may interrupt my father's obstinate determination to ruin me.

Rath.—Brother, I do not love you less than I revere your father.—I cannot wish your ruin.—Let us rely on his parental feelings and suffer not a third to interfere.—No good can result from it.

Lew.—Speak more plainly.

Rath.—(After a pause.) I dare not.

Lew.—Why?

Rath.—You see, your father's strength of mind and body daily decay. Do you think a mere whim could effect this?

Lew.—What else?

Rath.—Revere his sorrows. The day may come when you would give the wealth of the whole world that you had not touched any string too violently.

Lew.—What can I do?—Even if I be willing to sacrifice myself completely, what can I do to remove his melancholy?

Rath.—Act as a son.

Lew.—Have I ever acted otherwise?

Rath.—It is a great title, and its tenderest duties are already in part neglected, when the mind begins to argue upon it without the heart being concerned.

Lew.—Brother!

Rath.—Son! (They embrace and exeunt.)

ACT III.

SCENE.—A room in Talland's house. Lewis and Henry meet.

Henry.—I beg pardon, Mr. Lewis—are you going out?

Lewis.—Yes. Why do you ask?

Hen.—Your father wishes to see you, sir.

Lew.—Very well.—Who is the old gentleman I just now saw?

Hen.—A Mr. Ellof.

Lew.—What does he want here? Is he introduced by Miss Bolfeld?

Hen.—God forbid, sir! No. She seems not very well pleased at his arrival.

Lew.—Then he is doubtless an honest man.

Enter Frederica, somewhat better clothed than before, but still in a humble dress.

Frederica.—Allow me, Mr. Lewis, to request your good-will and sympathy. Your father has promised me both, in the most generous manner, as you must have heard.

Lew.—I have heard it with pleasure, and consider your abode in this house an auspicious omen. (Exit Henry.)

Fre.—I understand this answer only as far as it claims my gratitude.

Lew.—Inmates of one house should understand each other as soon as possible. Why should I conceal from you what you must have already in part observed! My father is old and infirm. A dragon has made this house her nest, and endeavors to banish his children from it. She will endeavor to procure your banishment, too, if she observes any kind attentions on your part to the old man.

Fre.—The unfortunate enjoy with gratitude the present moment, and leave futurity to Providence.

Lew.—But Providence ordains that caution is a duty. I am naturally ingenuous, and I read something in that countenance which would make me so were I otherwise. Love my father. He deserves it more than I do—or, rather, he wants it more, for he is older than I am, though not more unfortunate. You have entered a wretched house.

Fre.—Heaven forbid!

Lew.—My helpless situation commands me to do what surprises even myself—it commands me to confide in you.

Fre.—I cannot deserve this sudden confidence. Allow me time to fulfill one duty before I enter on another. Your father's kind disposition spared me all confusion—or, at least, greatly alleviated it. Imitate his example. The kinder he is the more attentve will I be, that I may thereby please his children. Be satisfied with this my good-will.

Lew.—I am satisfied and ashamed of having commenced our acquaintance by an appeal of sorrow.

Fre.—I did not wish you to think thus. Let us wait for a calmer moment, when we may, perhaps, understand each other better.

Lew.—Shall I ever know a calm moment?

Fre.—A feeling son may always find one in the arms of his father. You have justified the freedom with which I address you. Amidst the tempest of your soul, confide in the words of a stranger.

Lew.—They are not the words of a stranger. Praised be Providence for having conducted you to this house!

Fre.—When, on a better acquaintance, I have restored your father's peace of mind, you yourself may decide what I can do toward yours. (Exit.)

Lew.—She must despise me. I despise myself. A weak woman has a better understanding—has more firmness and resolution than myself. I turn toward every side. A thousand wishes are contending in my bosom, and I cannot satisfy one of them. Oh, I must—I must speak. My father gave being to this compound of desire and inability—and must assist me. It is his work—be it his care.

Enter Talland.

Talland.—I have, for some time, avoided all conversation with you, because all that a father could say neither seemed to make you wiser nor me easier. Finding, however, that you are now in a very critical situation, I must once more attempt to direct you in your progress. Lewis, at what point do you aim?

Lew.—Rather allow me to ask at what point you wish me to aim.

Tal.—I wish you to become a reputable, honest man; but, while you thus waste time and money, how can you expect to support any reputation?

Lew.—If you will allow that the fortunate state of your circumstances justifies me in considerable expectations, you cannot be surprised that I act in such a way as to establish for myself a proper rank in life.

Tal.—I wish you happiness. Believe me, my son, I wish you happiness.

Lew.—And yet refuse your consent to my marriage with Mr. Wehrman's sister?

Tal.—Do you feel an affection for her?

Lew.—(Shrugging his shoulders.) Does she for me?—Does any woman of fashion know what affection is?—I like her. The match will make me of more consequence, and that, according to the present opinions of the world, is a great object.

Tal.—Are you obliged to act according to the present opinions of the world on every occasion?

Lew.—Was the world ever better?

Tal.—Marriages were happier.

Lew.—Let me hear your plan, my father.

Tal.—You are in debt. To what amount?

Lew.—Two thousand dollars.

Tal.—Good God! (Walks to and fro in great agitation.)

Lew.—My small salary——

Tal.—Your expensive mode of life—your consummate vanity in associating with a class to which you do not belong——

Lew.—But surely, according to your circumstances——

Tal.—Circumstances! With a fortune of three thousand dollars it is, no doubt, justifiable to contract debts amounting to two.

Lew.—But the thirty thousand——

Tal.—Don't belong to you.

Lew.—At present, certainly not, but——

Tal.—Nor do they belong to me.

Lew.—To whom, then? Pardon me. The question is natural.

Tal.—It is.

Lew.—I know that since this fortune was bequeathed to you no use has been made of it—that you deprive yourself of the necessaries of life, in order to gratify your benevolent propensities, without interfering with the estate. I lament this. I grieve to see my sister in such straitened circumstances, and cannot think myself happy, as you will do nothing for me, while I see the insolent creature who directs your household revelling in your bounty.

Tal.—You appear to have justice on your side, and I am sorry I cannot remove this appearance. But do not form a judgment according to it. I was many years a good father —be you a good son.

Lew.—May I speak openly?

Tal.—Do so, Lewis.

Lew.—Relieve yourself from this unpleasant and uncertain situation. Bestow on this Miss Bolfeld decisive privileges rather than a dubious, dangerous influence. Bestow on her your name.

Tal.—(Throws himself into a chair and covers his face.) Not so, my son, not so.

Lew.—I know no better counsel.

Tal.—(Rises, embraces him, and then walks up and down for a short time.) Let us return to the subject. Lewis, notwithstanding the way in which you have hitherto lived, I still place such firm confidence in you that at this moment my only hope of happiness depends upon you.

Lew.—Speak—proceed.

Tal.—You may refuse to do what I wish. It will be hard upon me, but never will I compel you even by arguments to do it. You may refuse this, I say—but my command, my injunction—nay, if you please—my petition never to repeat what I am about to say—you will not, cannot refuse.

Lew.—You raise my expectations——

Tal.—Give me your hand. Now, promise your father, whose trembling hand holds yours, that you never will repeat what I shall say.

Lew.—I swear by——

Tal.—Hold! Do not swear. Oaths are become the playthings of form. Give me an upright filial promise.

Lew.—(Presses his father's hand to his heart.) I do promise.

Tal.—It is well. (Releases his hand.) A moment—I am so much oppressed. Listen—Soltau's property belongs to me according to his will—but according to my conviction it belongs to his relations.

Lew.—Did not those relations behave ill to him, when you acted as his sincere friend?

Tal.—The father behaved ill—not the children. I ought never to have accepted this fortune, and cannot now return it to the person who ought to have it, without exposing myself to calumnious reports—yet I will not retain it. My children shall not have it.

Lew.—That must be as you please.

Tal.—You know the nature of my resolutions. One way still remains by which you and your sister may obtain this

fortune. Lewis, my son, it is in your power to bestow on your father peace of mind. This is a decisive moment.—Accede to my wish and I will a second time thank Heaven as fervently as I thanked it when I first heard I had a son.

Lew.—Proceed, I beseech you.

Tal.—You have confessed your heart is not engaged, and you only want an establishment in life. Take half of the fortune—assign to your sister the remaining half—and obtain a right to it by marrying Soltau's lawful heiress.—Do not yet reply. You have seen her. She is handsome, and every word she utters proclaims the goodness of her heart.—Answer me not till I have finished. Reflect that you may become the benefactor of your sister—of your father—that you—— Oh, that I could find words to describe what blessings you will confer on me by this act! It will sweeten thy dying hour, Lewis, to have made thy father so happy, so—— I can say no more.—Answer.—Give me life or death.

Lew.—Dear father, can you doubt my readiness to obey this solemn injunction? But can you conceive that on me alone depends the power to obey it? How can your wish be represented to Miss Soltau, without conveying an appearance which must rather excite in her mind suspicions of injustice than gratitude for your kind intentions?

Tal.—(Doubtfully.) Lewis.

Lew.—Should she feel no attachment to me, will she not perceive on your part an absolute necessity—I use your own expression—to do her justice? What will be the consequence? —She will refuse me—make me the derision of the world—and not make you more easy.

Tal.—Oh, my son!

Lew.—(With enthusiasm.) My brother-in-law has roused in my bosom the sensation of the duties attached to the name of son. Be assured that your blessing is far more valuable to your children than your wealth. Give Miss Soltau, therefore, without any conditions, what you think you cannot justly withhold and be happy.

Tal.—(Taking his hand.) I am old and weak.—Let me reflect ere I decide——

Lew.—Allow me time, also, to try whether I am ever likely to obtain Miss Soltau's affections.

Tal.—Be it so.—Take my blessing, Lewis—my blessing and my thanks.—There! (Gives him a paper.)

Lew.—What is this?

Tal.—An engagement that I will discharge your debts.—I would not give it to you sooner, that you might not be induced to think I wished to bribe you. Send your creditors to me in the morning. Thanks to my economy, I can pay them from my own property.

Lew.—(Falling at his feet.) Oh, my father!

Tal.—(Raises him.) Rise.—My son, my friend, be silent. I dare not tell you all. Were I to confess all, you would both justify and condemn me. From the fear of condemnation I dare not attempt to justify myself.—Lewis, be silent. (Exit.)

Lew.—Rathing is right. A mere whim cannot have such effect on any man.—I feel as if I had no sorrows of my own, while there is a chance of my having it in my power to alleviate his.

Enter Rathing.

Rathing.—Have you mentioned Bolfeld's claim upon you as to his daughter?

Lew.—Who would think of the fellow for a moment?

Rath.—He is waiting at my house for your answer.

Lew.—He may go to the devil.

Rath.—Lewis, this affair becomes serious. What promise did you make to these people?

Lew.—I can swear with truth that I don't know—they made me drunk.

Rath.—Have compassion on your father and compromise the matter.

Lew.—How can I? Bolfeld will not be satisfied but by a considerable sum of money. Let him bellow and bawl as he will. He cannot make my father alter the favorable sentiments of me, which he has even this moment avowed.—No, no. I care not for him or that harridan, his sister.

Enter Miss Bolfeld.

Miss Bolfeld.—Who is a harridan, sir—eh?

Lew.—She who listens.

Rath.—What do you want here?

Miss B.—Nothing with you. I want to speak to Mr. Lewis.

Rath.—Speak respectfully, or by Heaven you will repent it.

Miss B.—I shall speak as I please. Advocates may give an opinion, but the decision rests with the judge.

Rath.—Speak respectfully—I warn you for the last time.

Miss B.—(To Lewis.) Will you marry my niece or not?

Lew.—Never.

Miss B.—Positively you will not?

Lew.—Most positively, never.

Miss B.—Then our business is at an end. (Courtesies.) Your servant, gentlemen. Take my word for it, I'll teach you both to speak respectfully. Ha! Ha! Ha! (Exit.)

Lew.—Hell and furies! What means she?

Rath.—The woman speaks in a tone of dreadful resolution.

Lew.—Damnation! I'll follow her, and——

Rath.—Hold! Be cool.

Lew.—Once more I swear that, as far as I know, I never made a promise of marriage.

Rath.—I must have time for reflection. We will speak further on the subject soon.

Lew.—But what will you——

Rath.—For the present, farewell. (Exit.)

Enter Frederica.

Frederica.—Have the goodness, Mr. Lewis, to interfere between Miss Bolfeld and the stranger who is here. Mr. Talland is in his own room, and I fear there will be a dispute.

Lew.—I go immediately to prevent it. (Exit.)

Fre.—I will return to my lowly situation, for discord reigns in this house.

Enter Talland.

Talland.—My dear girl, I have been thinking that your abode here is not likely to be pleasant. To-morrow I will take you to my daughter.

Fre.—Your kindness knows no bounds

Enter Ellof.

Ellof.—(As he enters.) Damn the Jezabel! (Exit Frederica.)

Tal.—Has anything disagreeable happened to you?

Ell.—Yes, and to your amiable housekeeper, too, for your son, without saying a word, has handed her so gently out of doors that I believe her limbs will not soon recover the concussion.

Tal.—Where is she?

Ell.—Lying in the street, and there let her lie.—Stop, I say—remain here.

Tal.—What occasioned this commotion?

Ell.—My pipe. I was smoking in as peaceable a way as possible, and thinking of my poor farm, when into the room burst the dragon and poured forth such a torrent of abuse as man never heard.

Tal.—Ellof—pity me.

Ell.—I do, but I'll not witness such misery any longer. I shall leave you to-morrow.

Tal.—No, no, my friend.

Ell.—Melancholy is infectious, and by degrees converts the firmest man into a mere child. Melancholy kills me. Mirth is my maxim.

Tal.—Do you abandon me because I cannot be cheerful?

Ell.—Not because you cannot, but because you will not.—My good fellow, did I not know your excellent heart I should think you had a bad conscience.

Tal.—(Suddenly seizes his hand.) You must not leave me, Ellof—you must not leave me.

Ell.—Will you be cheerful?

Tal.—I have a great plan dependent on you.

Ell.—Will you be cheerful?

Tal.—Who can teach, and who can learn that art?

Ell.—I and you. I'll give you an hour's lesson every day, over a bottle of wine. He who, when old, when robbed of all, can wander from his former home and still support his spirits—he is the proper teacher of cheerfulness—and I am the man. Accept me as your preceptor.

Tal.—Your intention is good, but——

Ell.—The lesson is over a bottle of wine.

Tal.—Alas, what can you do with me?

Ell.—Why, I can make you drink with me. But, come with me, at present, to your daughter, and think no more of the fallen Jezabel. Should she have the same fate as her predecessor—so much the better.—Come, come. When we return from your daughter, out comes the bottle of wine, and forthwith begin my instructions. You shall have a glass—and if you then behave ill—why, I'll empty the bottle.—Agreed! Agreed! Come! (Drawing him away.)

Tal.—I am without a hat.

Ell.—(Looks at him.) True. (Throws his own hat aside.) There—now we are alike. Come, come.

Tal.—(Resisting.) But the people——

Ell.—Pshaw! Confuse the people—something new, and our point is carried.

Enter Miss Bolfeld.

Miss Bolfeld.—Stop, I say. That monster——

Ell.—Huzza! March! Huzza!

Miss B.—He has behaved in such——

Ell.—Huzza! Huzza! Vive la joie! Vive l' allegresse! (Exit, leading Talland.)

Miss B.—That ever I was born to endure such conduct!—Thrown down half a dozen steps into the street!—But their triumph shall be short.—I'll be revenged.

Enter Bolfeld.

Bolfeld.—Well, what have you done? Here have I been exerting myself in every quarter, and not one proceeding do I know on your part that is likely to produce any profit.

Miss B.—Be at ease. Half of old Soltau's property must be ours—one way or other.

Bol.—One way or other! Pshaw! Nonsense. You have been talking in that silly way for half a year, and we seem no nearer the mark. I verily believe I shall some night hear you knock at my door after having been kicked out of the house without a farthing.

Miss B.—Heaven defend me! Mr. Lewis has made a beginning, for he kicked me out of doors just now.

Bol.—A pretty way of treating his future aunt!

Miss B.—His aunt I will be, too. I go on certain grounds.

Bol.—I advise you to do so. I am not to pay for champagne in order to intoxicate the fellow and then have no reward. I have made an attack on Rathing, but it did not succeed. What's to be done now?

Miss B.—Attack the old man.

Bol.—But if I alarm him too much he may die without a will.

Miss B.—Never fear. He has as many lives as a cat.—Attack him, I say, and bellow without mercy. Depend upon it that before sunset I will be at your house with half the fortune—for half I will have. Now go to the old man and insist on the marriage.

Bol.—May I be loud?

Miss B.—The louder the better.

Bol.—And if he will not consent——

Miss B.—Then he shall hear my thunder, and that will end the matter.

Bol.—Are you sure of that? For if you should come without money—damnation——

Miss B.—I tell you again, most positively, that before evening I will bring you half of old Soltau's fortune.

Bol.—Well, then, wherever I find old Talland—it matters not whether in house or street—I'll bawl till——

Miss B.—Go, then, and find him. (Exeunt.)

ACT IV.

SCENE.—A room in Talland's house.

Enter Talland and Ellof, hastily.

Talland.—(In great agitation and much exhausted.) This is too much. (Throws himself into a chair.)

Ellof.—But who is the fellow that had the impudence to attack you thus in the street?

Tal.—Bolfeld—my housekeeper's brother.

Ell.—The scoundrel!

Tal.—To address me thus!

Ell.—I wish you would have allowed me to make him feel my stick.

Tal.—And my son, too! What can the madman mean by forming a connection with such a creature? (Rises.) Go, go, my friend. Leave me. Why waste your life with one whose sorrows daily increase?

Ell.—I will assist you, my friend. You are irritable.—Compose yourself and procure me a conversation with your son. All will yet end well.

Tal.—Alas! How is that possible?

Ell.—Never despair. He who gives way to melancholy can never succeed in anything. Cheer up, and while I am settling matters with your son—talk to your housekeeper. Act as her master. Abolish the ascendency she has gained over you. It matters not how it was acquired—destroyed it must be.—Delays are dangerous—I'll tell the servant to send her hither. Talland—act like a man. (Exit.)

Tal.—He is right.—Yes.—I'll destroy this growing evil.—I'll learn my situation—I'll learn what she knows—what she does not know.—She comes.

Enter Miss Bolfeld.

Miss Bolfeld.—What are your commands?

Tal.—Deceitful, ungrateful woman!

Miss B.—It would be better for you if you could end with such words, instead of beginning with them.

Tal.—Thou torment of my life!

Miss B.—How can so indifferent a person be able to torment you?

Tal.—Because my impolitic kindness——

Miss B.—If it seems to you more politic—dismiss me.

Tal.—I do. You shall leave my house to-day.

Miss B.—With all my heart.

Tal.—Your wages you shall receive for life.

Miss B.—I want no wages.

Tal.—As you please.

Miss B.—I have other pretensions. If you refuse them——

Tal.—What pretensions?

Miss B.—I have my opinion respecting certain transactions.

Tal.—If you mean to refer to my son's conduct, I positively tell you he shall not marry your niece.

Miss B.—Then I have done. (Going.)

Tal.—Hold! Your brother and you do not wish this connection to take place. I plainly see that money is your object. You surround me on every side in order that you may extort money from me. If there be any spark of humanity in you, sell me the repose I want. I will purchase repose—I am old and cannot long enjoy it—therefore do not value it at too high a rate.

Miss B.—Now you talk rationally.

Tal.—How much, do you think, will satisfy your brother and provide for you?

Miss B.—What are you disposed to give?

Tal.—(After a pause.) Two thousand dollars.

Miss B.—That is nothing.

Tal.—I am obliged to pay my son's debts.

Miss B.—Soltau left you thirty thousand dollars.

Tal.—(With terrific violence.) Damned be—— (Walks up and down, endeavoring to compose himself.)

Miss B.—That I believe.

Tal.—What mean you, then? How far do your diabolical plans extend? How much do you require?

Miss B.—Half.

Tal.—Of what?

Miss B.—Of the thirty thousand.

Tal.—Begone!—Out of my house!—Begone!

Miss B.—I will not.—Compose yourself and listen, for the period is arrived when it becomes us both to declare our sentiments openly. Every one has an end in view. You had one and obtained it. At that time I formed one, too. Had you engaged me in your plan, you might have lived more comfortably. Mine is fixed. If you will let me share your prize with you, I am satisfied—if not, we shall, it is true, neither of us obtain anything, but you have more to lose than myself. I believe you perfectly understand me.

Tal.—Hear me.—We are both old. I daily grow more infirm. Let us both face death with a good conscience. From the fortune which I possessed before Soltau's death I have, by rigid economy, saved seven thousand dollars. Of this I can dispose. With two thousand I can pay my son's debts. The same sum will I give to my daughter, and the remaining three thousand to you.

Miss B.—And who is to have the thirty thousand?

Tal.—None of us. I have made a vow that it shall devolve to my friend's nearest relation—Frederica Soltau.

Miss B.—Indeed!—Strange enough!

Tal.—Take the three thousand dollars and remain with me. Make this act easier to me—for you must feel it is a good act. I will forget what you have done to displease me, and you will cause me to die in peace. Grant what I ask—I ask but little of you—and yet to me it is much. Can one fellow creature refuse another, when he asks no more?

Miss B.—Let the girl have the three thousand and us twelve. (Talland clasps his hands together with violence.) Then I shall be satisfied.

Tal.—(After a pause.) I have made a vow.

Miss B.—So have I.

Tal.—Go, go. I have nothing more to say.

Miss B.—Are you serious?

Tal.—I am.

Miss B.—You will not agree to my proposal?

Tal.—No. (Firmly.) No.

Miss B.—(After a pause.) Reflect. (Talland beckons to her to go.) Shall I go? (Talland turns away.) Shall I go? Are you resolved?

Tal.—God will assist me!

Miss B.—You may assist yourself.

Tal.—(With coldness and contempt.) Go.

Miss B.—(Approaches, and endeavors in vain to catch his eye—then in a furious and determined tone.) I will go. (Exit.)

Tal.—(Walks up and down.) Honor!—Alas!—What speaks here—(laying his hand on his breast)—is more.—For my honor I can now do nothing. What can I do for my conscience? (Casts his eyes in gloomy despair on the earth.) Thou end of human pain and sorrow, welcome! Welcome, death. (Raises his eyes slowly toward Heaven.) Almighty Judge, be merciful, if misery and despair lead me into the arms of my last friend.

Enter Lewis.

Lewis.—Mr. Ellof has spoken to me.

Tal.—What do you want?

Lew.—Be at ease with respect to Bolfeld's ridiculous demand.

Tal.—It is dreadful.

Lew.—One evening he intoxicated me and I know not what I said. I am ignorant of any promise, and will swear that I am so.

Tal.—To-day you will receive the money for your creditors.

Lew.—With respect to what you mentioned as your wish——

Tal.—My dear son, I fear my wish was not mentioned till too late. At present I am afflicted by other matters. Leave me.

Lew.—Oh, there comes my brother-in-law. (Exit.)

Enter Rathing.

Tal.—What do you want, my son?

Rathing.—Dear sir, your happiness is the sole object of my pursuits. Your sorrow increases every hour. Disclose to me the cause of it.

Tal.—I acknowledge your good intentions, but——

Rath.—Some uncommon burden hangs upon your mind. If, from the delicacy of your feelings, you reproach yourself in any degree, do yourself justice—look back upon the list of your good deeds—and find repose.

Tal.—(Takes his hand.) In the afternoon I'll come to you, and converse with you on several subjects. This is not the time, my son.

Rath.—I cannot bear that you should be seen in a false light.

Tal.—(Sighs.) It must be borne.

Rath.—You know that I have always feared Mr. Wehrman more than respected him. He is not your friend, and I am sorry to say he even speaks against you to your daughter.

Tal.—At three o'clock I'll be with you. No more, I do beseech you. I must be left alone in order to compose myself. Good-morning. (Talland throws himself in a chair, Rathing bows and exit.)

Enter Ellof.

Ellof.—Friend, be at ease with respect to your son. If Bolfeld should think proper to appear here again he shall soon be taught where the door lies, and his gentle sister——

Tal.—She is resolved to leave me.

Ell.—Bravo! Then peace will take her place.

Tal.—Alas, no. I am oppressed by a burden which cannot be removed.

Ell.—Where does it lie?

Tal.—(Lays his hand on his heart.) Here—here it has lain for years.

Ell.—Disclose the nature of it.

Tal.—I cannot.

Ell.—Look at me steadfastly. Talland, many a person has found consolation by confiding in me. I can comprehend sorrow, endure it and remove it. (Talland throws himself into his arms.) Right, my friend.

Tal.—(Gazes at him.) Ellof, when you have cast a look into the horrible abyss—you will start back and leave me forever.

Ell.—(With firmness.) I will not.—If you have ever forgotten yourself for a moment——

Tal.—I have—I have—and this moment has been followed by years of misery—yet still—still does my burden become heavier.

Ell.—Then bear it not alone—let me share it or remove it. Were your house on fire, would you shut the door against your neighbor, who offers his assistance?

Tal.—No. You shall know my secret. It is better to sink in the opinion of my friend than of my children.

Ell.—I can be silent, and may Heaven rob me of my cheerful disposition if I be not!

Tal.—On that condition I begin. Old Soltau was my bosom friend. He hated his relations, for they behaved infamously to him. Several years previous to his death he bequeathed his whole fortune to me. This he afterward repented, and three days before his death he made a second will. He placed —oh, look more mildly at me—he placed so much confidence in me that he employed me as his notary to prepare the will, and, after signing it, deposited it in my hands. (Strikes his breast.) One moment! (Leans on Ellof.)

Ell.—Cheer up, my friend. I know mankind.

Tal.—Oh, God, God!—By this second will he left his whole fortune to his relations, except a legacy to me. I never was covetous, but had rejoiced at the prospect of this fortune, from sincere affection to my children. For years I had been accustomed to consider it my own. The idea that my children would lose it was insufferable.—Parental affection misled me—I—— (Covers his face.) I cannot proceed.

Ell.—You concealed the second will.

Tal.—And produced the first.

Ell.—And thus became possessed of the property. I have heard the nature of your crime, and your present looks sufficiently proclaim your penitence.

Tal.—In motion, or on my pillow, the image of my dying friend appears before me. Every shadow which I see, every voice which I hear, calls on me for retribution. My conscience accuses me, my eyes betray me, and every one who looks keenly at me seems to condemn me. My punishment is every day new—every day more dreadful.—God have mercy on me—I can no more——

Ell.—Unhappy man, retain no longer the cause of your torments.

Tal.—Soltau's relations traduced my character.—Shame would not allow me to give up the whole fortune, and they refused to accept a part.—Never have I used any part of it, and at my death it shall devolve to the lawful heiress.

Ell.—Right, my friend! All will, then, be properly settled. Your penitence will be complete.

Tal.—This Miss Bolfeld was Soltau's housekeeper. She may, perhaps, suspect that a second will was made—nay, she may even know it. For this reason I took the monster into my family. She long conceived that my evil conscience would induce me to marry her, but finding this a fruitless hope, she began to tyrannize over me by oblique allusions to my guilt. I have been in a continued state of alarming uncertainty, but this uncertainty she has to-day removed by expressly demanding half of Soltau's property—or——

Ell.—Or what?

Tal.—She did not complete her threat, but a perfect knowledge of her character makes me sure she will proceed to the utmost.

Ell.—Unfortunate friend!

Tal.—I am lost. I would not repine at that, but my children—my children!

Ell.—Is she covetous?

Tal.—Very covetous—and her brother still more so.

Ell.—You are, at all events, resolved that the lawful heiress shall have the fortune?

Tal.—Most positively.

Ell.—Then you need not any longer torment yourself. Of course, you have destroyed the second will.

Tal.—No. It is still in my possession.

Ell.—Away with it!

Tal.—Often have I had it in my hands with the intention of burning it, but—I saw the signature of my late friend—I felt his unsuspecting confidence in me—I remembered that he died in my arms—I shuddered at the idea of what I had done, and fancied by destroying the will I was a second time committing the crime. The will fell from my hands, and with tears of agony I knelt near it and prayed.—It is still in my possession.

Ell.—It must be destroyed—this very day. Allow me a quarter of an hour's reflection, that I may determine how we should act toward this housekeeper.

Tal.—You despise me.

Ell.—Talland, the tempter has thrown you down, but you have valiantly fought against him till you have placed your foot upon his neck.

Tal.—I am prepared for all that may occur, and strive not against the decision of just fate. But my children, my children! That I, who erred through sincere affection for them —that I should brand them with infamy——

Ell.—Fear not that. You are not lost. Exert yourself and follow my directions.

Tal.—Nothing can now preserve me. Oh, conscience, conscience, thou robbest the soul of every faculty and consumest the very marrow in our bones. (Exit, led by Ellof.)

Enter Miss Bolfeld from the opposite side.

Miss Bolfeld.—So, Mr. Talland!—The lawful heiress is to have the property! Then have I lost all chance. No.—After ten years' expectation, I will not.

Enter Wehrman.

Wehrman.—Is Mr. Lewis at home?

Miss B.—I don't know.

Weh.—It is well that I find you here. Mark me. If your brother dares to utter another syllable relative to the marriage with his daughter, I'll talk to the fellow in a way he will not like.

Miss B.—(In a tone of defiance.) Let me tell you, sir, we are not so easily alarmed.

Weh.—Indeed!—Then I may, perhaps, begin with you.

Miss B.—(Astonished.) Me!

Weh.—You were in Soltau's house, and attended him during his last illness. You will be very seriously interrogated as to what you know;—but if you will place confidence in me you may find it to your advantage.

Miss B.—I shall not listen to any such proposal, mighty sir.

Weh.—As you like. I don't want your assistance. When the flame mounts, you probably will feel that it burns. Where is the new boarder?

Miss B.—Boarder!

Weh.—Yes—who, from well-calculated economical compassion, has been taken into the house.

Miss B.—You mean Miss Soltau, then?

Weh.—I do, and I mean that she may become very rich, if instructed how to act. (Exit.)

Miss B.—Mercy on me!—The whole face of circumstances has undergone a change. Must I, then, lose everything? (A pause.) Everything!—No.—No.—I'll lose nothing. One person still remains through whom I am certain to succeed. Henry!

Enter Henry.

Beg Miss Soltau to come hither. (Exit Henry.) You, Mr. Ellof, may reflect, and you, Mr. Wehrman, may commence a lawsuit. I'll outwit you both. You shall soon see whether your wisdom or my cunning is most effective.

Enter Frederica.

Frederica.—What can you want with me?

Miss B.—I want to strike a bargain with you. Heaven has appointed me to be the means of bestowing happiness upon you.

Fre.—How am I to understand this?

Miss B.—Come with me to my chamber, that we may not be interrupted. Heaven provides most miraculously for you.

Fre.—Through you?

Miss B.—Through me. Be grateful to God and reward his agent, that I may pass reputably through life. (Exeunt.)

Enter Talland and Ellof.

Talland.—There she goes. (He has a pistol in his hand, and attempts to follow her.) All is lost.

Ellof.—Hold! She is not alone. (Looks through the door.) She goes down the gallery—and enters a chamber.

Tal.—God of Heaven!—let me pass.

Ell.—Hold, I say. Is your servant honest?

Tal.—I dare be sworn he is.

Ell.—Talk to him with composure—tell him some accounts are missing—but with composure, I say, or all is lost. Go, I'll wait here till you return.

Tal.—She has the will. (Wipes his forehead.) The agonies of death are on me.

Ell.—Talland, on your instant composure depends everything. (Exit Talland.) I never was in such a situation. Assist me, invention, that I may save my friend.—No.—My mind is dark and clouded. (Suddenly.) How if I—— No.—I must not do anything. He must act. Surprise may gain the point—it is too late to compromise.—It must be so.—By this method we shall be rid of the brother.—But if she—that matters not. There is no other resource.

Reënter Talland.

Tal.—(Rushes with open arms toward Ellof.) She has it.

Ell.—Are you certain?

Tal.—She has locked herself more than once in my study.

Ell.—Summon your resolution. Seek her—speak to her—seize her—and place the pistol to her breast. She is not accustomed to resolution from you. Terror may effect much.

Tal.—And if she declares she has taken no paper, how dare I make reference to the will?

Ell.—She was locked in your study, and this justifies search. While you are speaking to her, Henry and I will open her chests and make strict examination.

Tal.—And if the will be in her brother's hands——

Ell.—Then we have no resource but bribery. The Bolfelds must have half—Miss Soltau half.—Come! No more delay. Henry shall lead me to her room.—I see her coming. (Exit.)

Enter Miss Bolfeld and Frederica from one side—Wehrman from the other.

Wehrman.—Where is Miss Soltau, Mr. Talland?

Tal.—This is Miss Soltau. (Frederica courtesies.)

Weh.—She lives here at present, I am told.

Tal.—She does.

Weh.—Madame, I feel a sincere interest in your uncommon fate.

Tal.—This, Miss Soltau, is Mr. Wehrman.

Weh.—Be so good as to inform me, sir, what this lady's fortune is.

Frederica.—Sir, I have no fortune.

Weh.—As far as you know.

Tal.—Have you any further knowledge?

Weh.—Perhaps I have. I have to communicate some very agreeable prospects to the lady, and shall be happy if she will, for that purpose, accompany me to my sister.

Tal.—Do you accept this invitation, Miss Soltau?

Fre.—(To Wehrman.) I am grateful for your kindness, sir, but no good fortune can happen to me which I should not be more pleased to hear in the presence of my benefactor than in any other place.

Weh.—As you please. (To Talland.) At present, therefore, you and I share the good intentions toward this lady. How happy would it make us if you and I could discover that she is entitled to a fortune! (To Frederica.) I have therefore only to warn you against any agreement or compromise. You shall soon know what are your pretensions. (Bows and exit.)

Tal.—(To Frederica.) Leave us awhile, my good girl. (Exit Frederica.—Miss Bolfeld is following her.) A word with you.

Miss Bolfeld.—I must speak to Miss Soltau.

Tal.—(Resolutely.) You shall not.

Miss B.—What do you want?

Tal.—(Locking the door.) Confess.

Miss B.—What?

Tal.—You have been in my study.

Miss B.—Sir——

Tal.—You have opened my desk.

Miss B.—Shall I speak in another tone?

Tal.—It is in vain. Your last hour has come, if you do not confess.

Miss B.—If you have a bad conscience, that is not my case.

Tal.—(Holds the pistol to her breast.) The papers!

Miss B.—(Alarmed beyond all measure.) Merciful God!

Tal.—May he be merciful to me for having deprived thee of life—if thou dost not confess.

Miss B.—Help!

Tal.—Utter another word and it shall be thy last. This murder would be pardonable, compared with all the misery and infamy which for years thy malice has heaped upon me. Not all my patience, not all my kindness and generosity, not all the sums which I withheld from my children and lavished upon thee, could ever make thee so humane as to grant me one moment's comfort.—Now expect no compassion—no mercy. —Vengeance, vengeance for all the torments thou hast inflicted upon me!—Hast thou stolen the papers?—Confess, or this moment thou diest.

Miss B.—Mercy! Mercy!—I did take a paper.

Tal.—This instant restore it.

Miss B.—Oh, Heavens! I no longer have it.

Tal.—(Cocks the pistol.) Who has it?

Miss B.—Miss Soltau.

Tal.—How long has she had it?

Miss B.—Only a few minutes. (A knock is heard at the door.) When I found that you would dismiss me without any reward—— (The knock is repeated.)

Tal.—Not another syllable! You are my prisoner.

Bolfeld.—(Without.) Is nobody here?

Miss B.—Yes, brother, yes.

Tal.—(To Miss Bolfeld.) Go into the next room, instantly.

Miss B.—Burst the door open. Help! Help! (Talland puts the pistol in his pocket and opens the door.)

Enter Bolfeld.

Bolfeld.—What has happened here?

Miss B.—He held a pistol to my breast.

Bol.—Damnation! I'll go to a magistrate.

Miss B.—Take me with you, brother.

Tal.—She shall not move from the spot.

Bol.—But I say she shall go with me, and he who attempts to detain her——

Tal.—(In a tone of stupefaction and despair.) True. She may go, and act as she pleases. I am tired of interfering with her conduct.

Miss B.—Now we shall see whose life is in danger. Yours, I rather think, sir. (Exeunt Bolfeld and Miss Bolfeld.)

Enter Ellof, from the other side.

Ellof.—Whither is she going?

Tal.—She is going to publish my infamy. All is inevitably lost. Miss Soltau is already in possession of the will.

Ell.—But don't let this woman go. (Going.)

Tal.—(Detains him.) Leave everything to Heaven.—My hour is come. (Draws the pistol hastily from his pocket and attempts to shoot himself.)

Ell.—(Seizes his arm.) Man!

Tal.—Release me—I can endure no more.—Cruel man, let me put an end to my sufferings. (Endeavors to release himself.) Despair is stronger than friendship.

Ell.—Help! Henry! Henry!

Enter on one side Henry, and on the other Mr. and Mrs. Rathing.

Henry.—For Heaven's sake. (Seizes Talland's right arm and wrests the pistol from his hand.) Dear, worthy sir——

Rathing.—What has happened?

Mrs. Rathing.—Dear father!

Tal.—Oh, that you had a father!—Go, Maria. You are a poor, forsaken orphan.

Mrs. R.—Say not so, dearest father.

Tal.—Mention not that name—and look not thus at me. There is peace and virtue in your looks—I cannot bear them.

Ell.—Compose yourself, friend. Go, Henry. (Exit Henry.)

Tal.—You cannot now assist me. Farewell, Maria—embrace me. (Presses her in his arms, then pushes her gently from him.) And now forget me—forget me, all of you.

Mrs. R.—Oh, may God forget me if I do not love you with the same affection that I always felt for you!

Tal.—That was not sufficient for me. I regarded not the costly blessing, and have brought infamy upon my children. Forgive me, Maria. You are poor—you are deprived of wealth and reputation—I have plundered you. (Takes her hand.) Forgive me.

Mrs. R.—Oh, that I could allay the tempest which rages in this breast! (Lays her hand on his breast.)

Tal.—That you cannot.—No one can—no one shall.—The form—the dying man—his breaking eye—— Do not look at me, Maria—thus he looked at me—thus my hand lay on his breast. (Puts Mrs. Rathing's hand aside.) When I pledged

to him—— Away! Away!—His lips are closed—but every figure which I see proclaims his dying will.

Rath.—I conjure you by all that is dear to you——

Tal.—Here it is hidden. (Beating his breast.) Here—here—deep below his will is hidden—it has been hidden fourteen years—air—air—air—my heart will break—give me air.

Mrs. R.—Father! Father!

Rath.—For Heaven's sake——

Ell.—'Rouse yourself.

Tal.—The angel of the Almighty has opened the tribunal. —The world is summoned—I am condemned—my children declared infamous—through me.—Curse me not.—Grant me—— (Sinks on his knees before his daughter.) Grant me thy pity —I beseech thee. (Falls back in a swoon. They catch him in their arms.)

ACT V.

SCENE.—The same.

Enter Lewis and Wehrman.

Wehrman.—What means this sudden alteration in the house? No one is to be seen.

Lewis.—I cannot understand it.

Weh.—Indeed. But I can—and have long understood it.—Who could have thought that a man with so bad a conscience would be the first to place others in a disgraceful light? But for your father's conduct I should now have been at the top of preferment. For years I have used every possible effort that I might be able to gain public satisfaction for the public disgrace he brought upon me. The wished-for moment is arrived, and I will not let it pass without availing myself of it.

Lew.—Is this your friendship? Would you try to ruin the father of your friend?

Weh.—He is my enemy, and I am only doing an act of justice. Soltau's fortune must be transferred to the lawful heiress. It is evident that the will by which your father obtained it was a false one.

Lew.—Dare you attempt——

Weh.—I every moment perceive more palpably that the attempt is not daring. As for you—of course there is an end to the connection between you and my sister; but I will, nevertheless, assist you in your pursuits.

Lew.—And if the worst were true, how will you act toward my father?

Weh.—The only means of persuading me not to make his crime public will be to confess to me that he is as guilty as he wished to make me appear in the eyes of the world—but he must throw himself entirely upon my mercy.

Lew.—You are a monster. I despise myself for listening to you.

Weh.—You feel as a son ought to feel, but remember your father's situation makes it necessary that you should beware of using illiberal language to me.

Lew.—My father cannot be what you describe.

Weh.—Come with me to your room and I will communicate the proofs to you.—But, however, you are young, and may, perhaps, gain the affections of this Miss Soltau, by which you will become possessed of the whole fortune and can support your relations.

Lew.—Spare your humiliating counsel and have compassion on my father.

Weh.—I have observed his conduct with a watchful eye so long that I sink under the foolish weakness of feeling pity for him. I promise to conceal his error from the world, but only on condition of being allowed to convince him that it is in my power to retaliate upon him.

Lew.—The son must be silent, but at least avoid the family for the present, and let me speak to you as a friend. (Exeunt.)

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Rathing and Ellof.

Mrs. Rathing.—Alas, I have no hope. My father is lost to the world and us.

Rathing.—Compose yourself, Maria.

Ellof.—I must own, the attack is severe, but this might naturally be expected. That a secret, on which his character

depends, should be brought to light after having been concealed in his own breast for so many years—that his sincere repentance may not be so well known as his crime—all this must affect him deeply. But, thank Heaven, the storm is over. He must now seek repose elsewhere.

Rath.—Undoubtedly. He must see the inhabitants of this place as little as possible.

Ell.—He must prevail upon himself to appear once more among them—and then away! I will accompany him.

Mrs. R.—But what is to be done here? Miss Soltau has the will.

Ell.—Perhaps it is not yet opened.

Mrs. R.—And the Bolfelds! What——

Ell.—With them nothing but money will avail. Go, my dear sir, and send Bolfeld to me.

Rath.—Offer what you please. We wish for no parental inheritance if a father's peace can be purchased with it.

Mrs. R.—Dearest William! (Embraces him.)

Ell.—Right!—Lewis must undertake to silence Wehrman—I'll direct this.—But that he may not form a combination with Bolfeld, send the avaricious bully hither instantly.—You, madame, must attend to your father—but at present let him sleep. I will have an immediate conversation with Miss Soltau, after which I shall be ready for Bolfeld.

Mrs. R.—Heaven reward you, sir, for the interest you feel——

Ell.—Not another word—and not another tear! For the crime which has been committed torrents of tears have already been shed. (Takes their hands.) Courage, my friends! All may yet end well. Go, go. (Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. Rathing.) Wehrman! Wehrman!—Alas! There hangs the cloud which threatens to destroy my plans.

Enter Lewis, much agitated.

Lewis.—Where is my father?

Ell.—In his room, but how long he will remain there—or can remain there, I know not.

Lew.—God of Heaven!

Ell.—What will you do for him?

Lew.—Everything that man can do.—Who will advise me——

Ell.—I will.

Lew.—Is it true, then, that the will——

Ell.—It is true.

Lew.—That my father's honor——

Ell.—Young man, I admire your feeling, but recollect that he, who exposed himself to danger for your sake, ought not to be deprived of honor in your eyes.

Lew.—Can you imagine I condemn him?

Ell.—(Takes his hand.) Henceforth I shall not imagine you capable of it.—As for honor, if you choose to gain it by filial exertion, I'll be your instructor.

Lew.—I am astonished that a stranger——

Ell.—Congenial minds are not strangers to each other.

Lew.—Oh, speak, then. What must be done?

Ell.—(Lays his hand on Lewis' breast.) This must tell you.

Lew.—(Resolutely.) Frederica shall have the fortune.

Ell.—Right!

Lew.—But I fear it will be difficult to silence Wehrman.

Ell.—That you must attempt. Your father's distress urges this implacable man to prove his suspicions by force; and such conduct has as great, perhaps a greater, effect on a suffering penitent than absolute proof would have upon a hardened villain.

Lew.—He will conceal the circumstance from the world if my father will confess all to him in private.

Ell.—Such a demand will kill your father.

Lew.—All petitions are in vain.

Ell.—Then only one expedient remains. The laws forbid it, but filial affection, roused to the utmost by despair, justifies it.

Lew.—I understand you, and my sensations anticipated your sentiments; but the fear of doing anything which might

draw the attention of the public to my father deterred me. Now, however, when you urge it—— (Going.)

Ell.—Yet hold!—You are right.—Another way is still open to us. Falsehood must aid where truth cannot prevail. Be ready to maintain everything I propose—everything I say of you.

Lew.—I do not comprehend you.

Ell.—Time is precious. Send Wehrman to me.

Lew.—I place my father's fate in your hands.

Ell.—Some one comes.—Send Wehrman hither. (Exit Lewis.)

Enter Frederica.

Miss Soltau, I am a friend of this family. At my age a man may be supposed to have obtained some knowledge of the world. I wish for your confidence, and time will not permit me to say more than that you shall find me worthy of it.

Frederica.—After having witnessed your conduct, sir, since I came to this house, I willingly grant it—nay, come hither to ask your advice.

Ell.—That you shall have. Providence has placed you in a critical situation. You have received a paper. Was it open when you received it?

Fre.—It was.

Ell.—Have you read it?

Fre.—I have.

Ell.—And how do you mean to act?

Fre.—In such a manner as to injure no one. Oh, instruct my inexperienced youth, and tell me how I can be of any service to Mr. Talland.

Ell.—I perceive you are worthy of the fortune which must fall to you. But hear me. As God shall judge me, Talland had determined that you should have it before he took you into his house.

Fre.—Oh, I willingly believe it. Your word and the kindness with which he sought me are sufficient proofs. I am still more indebted to him than I thought. His children shall not be deprived of all.

Ell.—Good girl!—Bolfeld may, I think, be bribed, but the suspicions of Wehrman——

Enter Lewis.

Lewis.—Mr. Ellof, my father wants you.

Ell.—Will you consent to appear ignorant of all that has happened, and to accept the whole fortune as a present from Talland?

Fre.—I will.

Ell.—We must lose no time. May I rely on this?

Fre.—(Presents her hand to him.) Most firmly.

Ell.—God reward you, and when a young man worthy of you shall obtain this hand, the recollection of your present conduct must make you completely happy. God bless you! (Exit.)

Fre.—(To Lewis, who is going.) Mr. Lewis!

Lew.—Madame!

Fre.—When I last saw you, I begged that our conversation might end. I now entreat your patience.

Lew.—You need but command.

Fre.—Pardon me, if I avail myself of this opportunity to speak on the subject with which your mind must at present be wholly concerned. Your father is justified in my eyes and in the eyes of Heaven, for his contrition has been sincere; willingly, therefore, will I lend my aid to justify him in the eyes of the world. Repeat this to your sister and brother-in-law, to whom I would be happy to say it if I did not wish to make you the messenger of good tidings, who have so often gone to them for a far different purpose.

Lew.—You surprise me——

Fre.—Hear further. My uncle did not forget his friend entirely—nor shall I forget him. Be assured that Mr. Talland may be at ease with respect to his children.

Lew.—Can you, by humiliating generosity——

Fre.—Your father is just—you are just—allow me to be so, too.—I shall rejoice to see you more happy and composed. (Exit.)

Lew.—My admiration for her sense and virtue increases each time that I converse with her, but it is, thank Heaven, admiration unmingled with interested motives.

Enter Bolfeld.

Bolfeld.—Pshaw! Never tell me——

Lew.—What do you want, sir?

Bol.—Not you for a son-in-law, Mr. Light-purse.

Lew.—Scoundrel, I'll kick you out of doors.

Bol.—But not till you have paid me—and paid me handsomely, too. Oh, that I had known this story of the will sooner! You should have offered me a round sum on your knees.

Lew.—If you have any regard for your bones——

Bol.—You ought to thank me for only bawling within doors, for if I were to proclaim what I know in the street, every window of the house would be broken in a trice.

Enter Rathing.

Rathing.—Be quiet, I beseech you, and have compassion on the old man.

Bol.—What! Have compassion on a man who held a pistol to my sister's breast!—At a word—eight thousand dollars I'll have—or the devil himself shall be let loose.

Rath.—But Miss Soltau will obtain the fortune.

Bol.—That's your concern—not mine. The money I will have, and if my sister had not been a great fool we should have had a great deal more long ago.

Rath.—I have already made the utmost offer.

Bol.—What! a few paltry dollars, forsooth! Will you or will you not give me eight thousand?

Rath.—I will not.

Bol.—Then abide by the consequence. (Going.)

Enter Ellof.

Ellof.—(Detains Bolfeld.) Hallo, townsman!

Bol.—Townsman! Who are you?

Ell.—One who proceeds with vigor when he discovers villainous intentions. I know Mr. Bolfeld well. Submit, or dread me.

Bol.—Damnation! What do you want?

Ell.—You shall have a thousand dollars, on condition that you and your sister sign an article, declaring it to be your joint opinion that no second will was ever made. Instantly consent or the nefarious traffic in smuggled goods between you and Reefeld shall be brought to light, and Mr. Bolfeld's dismissal must, of course, ensue. Answer.

Bol.—Smuggled!—Does a runaway fellow presume to accuse me——

Ell.—(Seizes him by the collar.) Scoundrel!——

Bol.—Mercy on me—for Heaven's sake.

Ell.—You have robbed the government of its revenue, and that part of its revenue which you are appointed to receive.

Bol.—Pray, sir, can you produce any proofs of this?

Ell.—I can, villain. The wagoners employed by you are ready to testify it.

Bol.—(Aside.) Damnation!

Ell.—Now, consent instantly or I will proceed to establish your guilt.

Bol.—Mercy on me!—I must first consult my poor sister, and if she has no objection——

Ell.—Begone, then. A thousand dollars—and no more. Begone, I say.

Bol.—I always told the blockhead to bring the affair to a conclusion. Now we must be satisfied with a paltry thousand. —The stupid old fool. (Exit.)

Ell.—That fellow is secured. Reefeld and I lived in the same village, and I was lately apprised of the connection between him and Bolfeld. I was resolved to expose their villainy, but rejoice I have so good a reason for concealing it. We must now disarm Wehrman. Go to your father, Mr. Lewis —receive the money designed for the payment of your debts, and take leave of him.

Lew.—I will not forsake my father.

Rath.—Leave!

Ell.—The carriage is ordered. He must quit this place for a short time.—I own, I wish your wife would accompany him.

Rath.—She can and will.

Ell.—Some one else must accompany him, too, if all be as I wish.

Lew.—I repeat that I will not forsake him.

Ell.—If you will not confirm his melancholy by letting him perceive your own, I can have no objection. Remember, you must support me in everything. Wehrman will come, I presume?

Lew.—Very soon.

Ell.—Go, then—summon your spirits, and return with a cheerful countenance.

Lew.—As cheerful as it can be. (Exit.)

Ell.—Now to business again.—Wehrman can make no complaint respecting a concealed will, if the heiress deny its existence. We must confuse him by a bold stroke. (Espies Frederica.) It is well you come.

Enter Frederica.

Frederica.—It cannot be pleasant to any one that I should any longer remain in this house. (Presents a paper to Ellof.) Here is my grateful acknowledgment of Mr. Talland's bounty.

Ell.—Generous girl! Will you rescue the good man entirely? It is in your power.

Fre.—Most willingly.

Ell.—Will you, to effect this, undertake—what I dare scarcely ask?

Fre.—Anything compatible with my honor.

Ell.—His melancholy situation makes me venture any request by which my friend can be rescued.—My dear girl, consent for a short time to acknowledge yourself engaged to Lewis. The most solemn article shall be given to you, declaring you are free. Confess that you are engaged to him in the presence of Wehrman, and leave this place with us.

At the expiration of a few weeks it may be said that, not finding him the man with whom you can be happy, you have declined his addresses, and that his father, incensed at his conduct, has restored to you the property of your uncle. Thus, for a short time we shall silence the world, and all will, in the meanwhile, be properly adjusted. Do you feel yourself capable of doing so much to save my unhappy friend?

Fre.—(After a pause.) As far as I can at present judge—it will not be easy to me.

Rath.—That I feel.

Fre.—But if you both think that it will produce such happy consequences——

Rath.—It will; it will.

Fre.—I will consent to it, then, on the conditions you have mentioned.

Rath.—(Kisses her hand.) I admire—revere you.

Ell.—The deed by which you are acknowledged to be at liberty you shall receive from me. Now, Wehrman is completely disarmed. Go, dear, generous girl. We expect him every moment. (Exit Frederica.) When he comes, we must, as if by accident, make some allusion to the pretended connection between the young people.

Enter Talland, Lewis and Mrs. Rathing.

Come, my friend—hold up your head. All goes on as we wish. (Talland looks at him.)

Rath.—You may be at ease now, dear sir. (Talland sighs.)

Lewis.—I accompany you on the journey—don't I, my father?

Talland.—Journey! (Reflects awhile.) Yes—I must begin the journey——

Ell.—Right, my good friend.

Tal.—(Takes his daughter's hand.) Do you hear?

Mrs. Rathing.—We are all of one opinion in that respect, dear father.

Ell.—Miss Soltau consents to the declaration that she is engaged to Mr. Lewis.

Lew.—To me!

Ell.—Not another word. Obey, that you may prove your filial affection—but, remember, this is only a pretended engagement——

Lew.—You need not remind me of that.

Ell.—So much the better. All, then, is settled. You must now, my friend, lend us some little assistance by appearing cheerful as we pass through the streets, after which we will allow you a tear, if you feel yourself thereby relieved.

Tal.—(Smiles.) I have shed many tears—and I remember they relieved me.—But how to appear cheerful—I know not. (Looks round.) I feel as if I was many years older. (Sighs.) I am so weary——

Mrs. R.—(Apart to Ellof.) Heavens! What means this?

Ell.—(With composure.) I am sorry for it.

Tal.—Give me a chair—I cannot bear my sorrows and my body. (Seats himself.) The burden is too great—too great.

Ell.—You will soon be better, my good friend. (Talland shakes his head and smiles.) You will, indeed.

Tal.—Not here—not here.—Maria, come hither—seat yourself close to me—close to my heart.

Mrs. R.—(Takes a chair.) Dearest father!

Tal.—I thought I had something more to say to you.—Perhaps it would have been better if I had not seen you—for the sight of you distresses me.

Lew.—(Kneeling before him.) My father!

Tal.—Maria, your hand!—You were always good. Your hand, too, Lewis.—It trembles, my son.—I wanted to tell you that I love you—and you, too, Rathing. This is old—but it is true.

Ell.—You must not give way to this despondency, friend.

Mrs. R.—Oh, cease, you will break my heart.

Tal.—I will no longer distress any one. Oh! (Strikes his breast.) Open a window. (Lewis obeys.) I am so hot—so oppressed—and—— (Beckons to Ellof, who approaches—and to whom he whispers.) Don't let them all flit before me thus.

Ell.—I'll prevent it. (Shakes his head, turns away and wipes his eyes.)

Tal.—Must it be so?—Well, well—it is late—and I must go to the chancellor. (Rises.)

Mrs. R.—Compose yourself, dear father. (Causes him to sit down again.) Compose yourself.

Tal.—Is not that Mr. Wehrman?

Rath.—He is not here, sir.

Tal.—Indeed! (Sighs.) Wehrman is the cause of my being obliged to go away. (A pause.) I was thinking that as I must go away, and we are now together, I might give you some good advice—for who knows when we shall meet again?

Lew.—Your will shall be our law.

Tal.—Much will be said against me now, and after my death—but you must not attend to it. You, Maria, must not weep when you hear my honor called in question—and you, my sons, must not be violent, as good sons might be on such an occasion. Call to mind that you are good children, but that I—was not a good father.

Ell.—For Heaven's sake, cease, I beseech you.

Tal.—(Wipes his eyes.) Now I have been obliged to weep. —Yes.—I must go—I must leave my family, my native land, and the tomb which contains your mother, and which I wished to have contained me, too. (Gazes at all with folded hands.) Old and infirm as I am, I must fly and avoid the sight of every honest man.

Ell.—(Much agitated.) Cease, I say. I command—I insist upon it.

Tal.—(Seems somewhat alarmed, looks at Ellof and then says, with composure:) Yes—I obey—I'll do anything you wish. I have no will—I may not have a will. (In a friendly tone to Ellof.) Shall I go?

Ell.—Yes—your son and daughter will accompany you on the journey.

Lew. and Mrs. R.—Yes, dear father.

Tal.—Don't deceive me, for were I to leave my home without you, it would break my heart.

Lew. and Mrs. R.—We will accompany you, indeed.

Tal.—Well—take my blessing for your filial affection. I may be allowed to bless you—for the greatest criminal is allowed, before his execution——

Mrs. R.—(Kneels.) I receive with gratitude the blessing of the best and most unfortunate of fathers.

Lew.—(Kneels.) The blessing of Heaven.

Tal.—Never become rich—never—never—for I can tell you, in confidence—— (Draws his children to him. Rathing, unperceived by his wife, takes the hand of Ellof and points, with a look of anguish, to his forehead.)

Ell.—Oh, God!

Mrs. R.—(Turns away and throws herself into the arms of her husband.) He is lost.

Tal.—(Seems to be seeking something in his breast.) See—here—there—(puts his hand to his head)—and there—how painful!

Lew.—What thus distresses you?

Tal.—Conscience, conscience. Oh, I am hot—dreadfully hot—and you—you are all in tears. Right! I have robbed you of everything—but forgive me—for although I make you unhappy, I am so, too—and I am still your father. (Throws himself into the arms of his son.)

Enter Wehrman.

Wehrman.—I hear strange news, indeed.

Ell.—Come, madame. We will conduct your father to his room.

Tal.—(Rivets his eyes on Wehrman.) There he is. I am ready. (To the rest.) Farewell!

Weh.—Are you not well?

Tal.—(Releases himself.) I am extremely well. (Presses Wehrman's hand.) I sincerely thank you for having relieved me. (Gives his keys to Rathing.) There! (Kisses his daughter and embraces his son and friend.) Yes—I am released. Celebrate my release without a curse.

Lew.—(To Wehrman.) Oh, leave us.

Tal.—Peace! Listen to me.

Ell.—You are too weak——

Tal.—Mr. Wehrman, you are my friend. I may entrust it to you.

Ell.—(To Wehrman.) Sir, you see his situation. (Seizes Talland by the arm.) Come to your room.

Tal.—No—no—I must first make peace—I will honorably restore all——

Rath.—He has made his daughter-in-law a present of the Soltau estate. (Leading him away.)

Tal.—See—they want to drag me away. Help! (They quit their hold.)

Weh.—Compose yourself, Mr. Talland.

Tal.—(Goes toward Wehrman.) The will was false—totally false.

Lew.—You see his situation, Mr. Wehrman.

Weh.—I go.

Tal.—No. Stay. All is well. I feel better than I was—I feel easier—more cheerful.—Ha! What are those men bearing?—See—there—see—how kindly he looks at me.—Don't you see him—old Soltau?—There, to the right—there he lies.—Silence! Silence!—His eyes are closed. He is asleep.—I'll wake him. (Totters toward a chair.—Lewis supports him.)

Mrs. R.—Oh, my father, my father!

Ell.—His senses are fled.

Lew.—There is your victory.

Weh.—(Agitated.) Oh, I wished not for such a victory.

Tal.—(Kneels before the chair.) Awake! Awake!—I have restored all—I have no more.—Pursue me no longer—awake and forgive me—awake!—Ha!—He opens his eyes—he offers me his hand—he draws me to him. (With a cry of horror.) Oh! How cold you are! (Becomes very weak.) So cold—so cold—oh! (His breath begins to fail, but he attempts to rise.) Let me—— (They support him.) Let me——

Weh.—(To Ellof.) I will maintain that I have seen and heard nothing.—This is too much. (Exit.)

Tal.—So cold—so dark—— (Draws breath with great difficulty.) Now I am well—very well. (Staggers and becomes convulsed.)

Rath.—A chair!

Tal.—(Starts from the arms of those who support him.) Fire! Fire!—Oh! (Falls—his breast heaves high—he expires.)

Mrs. R.—Help! Help! (Rushes out.)

Lew.—God of Heaven! (Kneels and takes his hand.)

Rath.—(With uplifted hands and voice choked with tears.) Oh, conscience, conscience!

Ell.—(Casts a look of agony toward Talland.) My friend! —We shall meet again. (The curtain falls.)

IPHIGENIA IN TAURIS

BY

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE.

(*Translated by Anna Swanwick.*)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IPHIGENIA.

THOAS, King of the Taurians.

ORESTES.

PYLADES.

ARKAS.

SCENE—A GROVE BEFORE THE TEMPLE OF DIANA

ARGUMENT.

In Goethe's *Iphigenia in Tauris* the heroine appears in the temple of Diana, in the Tauric Chersonese, or, as it is now termed, the Crimea, then inhabited by a barbarous race, which, according to tradition, sacrificed at the altar of the goddess all strangers cast on their shores. Hither come Orestes and Pylades, and are brought into the presence of Iphigenia, who, as priestess, presides over the bloody rites. But instead of a victim, she finds in Orestes a brother, and, as in the drama of Euripides, the chief interest lies in the escape of Iphigenia and Orestes from the Taurian shore. In Goethe's play it is the character of the heroine that awakens our warmest sympathy, and not as in that of Euripides, the generous friendship of Orestes and Pylades.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Iphigenia.

Beneath your leafy gloom, ye waving boughs
Of this old, shady, consecrated grove,
As in the goddess' silent sanctuary,
With the same shudd'ring feeling forth I step,
As when I trod it first, nor ever here
Doth my unquiet spirit feel at home.
Long as the mighty will, to which I bow,

Hath kept me here conceal'd, still, as at first,
I feel myself a stranger. For the sea
Doth sever me, alas! from those I love,
And day by day upon the shore I stand,
My soul still seeking for the land of Greece.
But to my sighs, the hollow-sounding waves
Bring, save their own hoarse murmurs, no reply.
Alas for him! who friendless and alone,
Remote from parents and from brethren dwells;
From him grief snatches every coming joy
Ere it doth reach his lip. His restless thoughts
Revert forever to his father's halls,
Where first to him the radiant sun unclos'd
The gates of heav'n; where closer, day by day,
Brothers and sisters, leagu'd in pastime sweet,
Around each other twin'd the bonds of love.
I will not judge the counsel of the gods;
Yet, truly, woman's lot doth merit pity.
Man rules alike at home and in the field,
Nor is in foreign climes without resource;
Possession gladdens him, him conquest crowns,
And him an honorable death awaits.
How circumscrib'd is woman's destiny!
Obedience to a harsh, imperious lord,
Her duty, and her comfort; sad her fate,
Whom hostile fortune drives to lands remote:
Thus I, by noble Thoas, am detain'd,
Bound with a heavy, though a sacred chain.
Oh! with what shame, Diana, I confess
That with repugnance I perform these rites
For thee, divine protectress! unto whom
I would in freedom dedicate my life.
In thee, Diana, I have always hop'd,
And still I hope in thee, who didst infold
Within the holy shelter of thine arm
The outcast daughter of the mighty king.
Daughter of Jove! hast thou from ruin'd Troy
Led back in triumph to his native land
The mighty man, whom thou didst sore afflict,
His daughter's life in sacrifice demanding—

Hast thou for him, the godlike Agamemnon,
Who to thine altar led his darling child,
Preserv'd his wife, Electra, and his son,
His dearest treasures?—then at length restore
Thy suppliant also to her friends and home,
And save her, as thou once from death didst save,
So now, from living here, a second death.

SCENE II.

Iphigenia, Arkas.

Arkas.—The king hath sent me hither, and commands
To hail Diana's priestess. This the day,
On which for new and wonderful success,
Tauris her goddess thanks. The king and host
Draw near—I come to herald their approach.

Iph.—We are prepared to give them worthy greeting;
Our goddess doth behold with gracious eye
The welcome sacrifice from Thoas' hand.

Ark.—Oh, priestess, that thine eye more mildly beam'd—
Thou much-rever'd one—that I found thy glance,
O consecrated maid, more calm, more bright,
To all a happy omen! Still doth grief,
With gloom mysterious, shroud thy inner mind;
Still, still, through many a year we wait in vain
For one confiding utt'rance from thy breast.
Long as I've known thee in this holy place,
That look of thine hath ever made me shudder;
And, as with iron bands, thy soul remains
Lock'd in the deep recesses of thy breast.

Iph.—As doth become the exile and the orphan.

Ark.—Dost thou then here seem exil'd and an orphan?

Iph.—Can foreign scenes our fatherland replace?

Ark.—Thy fatherland is foreign now to thee.

Iph.—Hence is it that my bleeding heart ne'er heals.
In early youth, when first my soul, in love,
Held father, mother, brethren fondly twin'd,

A group of tender germs, in union sweet,
We sprang in beauty from the parent stem,
And heavenward grew. An unrelenting curse
Then seiz'd and sever'd me from those I lov'd,
And wrench'd with iron grasp the beauteous bands.
It vanish'd then, the fairest charm of youth,
The simple gladness of life's early dawn;
Though sav'd, I was a shadow of myself,
And life's fresh joyance bloom'd in me no more.

Ark.—If thus thou ever dost lament thy fate,
I must accuse thee of ingratitude.

Iph.—Thanks have you ever.

Ark.— Not the honest thanks
Which prompt the heart to offices of love;
The joyous glance, revealing to the host
A grateful spirit, with its lot content.
When thee a deep mysterious destiny
Brought to this sacred fane, long years ago,
To greet thee, as a treasure sent from heaven
With reverence and affection, Thoas came,
Benign and friendly was this shore to thee,
Which had before each stranger's heart appall'd,
For, till thy coming, none e'er trod our realm
But fell, according to an ancient rite,
A bloody victim at Diana's shrine.

Iph.—Freely to breathe alone is not to live.
Say, is it life, within this holy fane,
Like a poor ghost around its sepulchre
To linger out my days? Or call you that
A life of conscious happiness and joy,
When every hour, dream'd listlessly away,
Leads to those dark and melancholy days,
Which the sad troop of the departed spend
In self-forgetfulness on Lethe's shore?
A useless life is but an early death;
This, woman's lot, is eminently mine.

Ark.—I can forgive, though I must needs deplore,
The noble pride which underrates itself.
It robs thee of the happiness of life.

And hast thou, since thy coming here, done naught?
Who cheer'd the gloomy temper of the king?
Who hath with gentle eloquence annull'd,
From year to year, the usage of our sires,
By which, a victim at Diana's shrine,
Each stranger perish'd, thus from certain death
Sending so oft the rescued captive home?
Hath not Diana, harboring no revenge
For this suspension of her bloody rites,
In richest measure heard thy gentle prayer?
On joyous pinions o'er the advancing host,
Doth not triumphant conquest proudly soar?
And feels not every one a happier lot,
Since Thoas, who so long hath guided us
With wisdom and with valor, sway'd by thee,
The joy of mild benignity approves,
Which leads him to relax the rigid claims
Of mute submission? Call thyself useless! Thou,
Thou, from whose being o'er a thousand hearts,
A healing balsam flows? when to a race,
To whom a god consign'd thee, thou dost prove
A fountain of perpetual happiness,
And from this dire inhospitable shore
Dost to the stranger grant a safe return?

Iph.—The little done doth vanish to the mind,
Which forward sees how much remains to do.

Ark.—Him dost thou praise, who underrates his deeds?

Iph.—Who estimates his deeds is justly blam'd.

Ark.—We blame alike, who proudly disregard
Their genuine merit, and who vainly prize
Their spurious worth too highly. Trust me, priestess,
And hearken to the counsel of a man
With honest zeal devoted to thy service:
When Thoas comes to-day to speak with thee,
Lend to his purpos'd words a gracious ear.

Iph.—The well-intention'd counsel troubles me:
His offer studiously I've sought to shun.

Ark.—Thy duty and thy interest calmly weigh.
Since the king lost his son, he trusts but few,

Nor those as formerly. Each noble's son
He views with jealous eye as his successor;
He dreads a solitary, helpless age,
Or rash rebellion, or untimely death.
A Scythian studies not the rules of speech,
And least of all the king. He who is used
To act and command, knows not the art,
From far, with subtle tact, to guide discourse
Through many windings to its destin'd goal.
Do not embarrass him with shy reserve
And studied misconception: graciously,
And with submission, meet the royal wish.

Iph.—Shall I then speed the doom that threatens me?

Ark.—His gracious offer canst thou call a threat?

Iph.—'Tis the most terrible of all to me.

Ark.—For his affection grant him confidence.

Iph.—If he will first redeem my soul from fear.

Ark.—Why dost thou hide from him thy origin?

Iph.—A priestess secrecy doth well become.

Ark.—Naught to our monarch should a secret be;
And, though he doth not seek to fathom thine,
His noble nature feels, ay, deeply feels,
That studiously thou hid'st thyself from him.

Iph.—Displeasure doth he harbor 'gainst me, then?

Ark.—Almost it seems so. True, he speaks not of thee,
But casual words have taught me that the wish
To call thee his hath firmly seiz'd his soul;
Oh, do not leave the monarch to himself!
Lest his displeasure, rip'ning in his breast,
Should work thee woe, so with repentance thou
Too late my faithful counsel shalt recall.

Iph.—How! doth the monarch purpose what no man
Of noble mind, who loves his honest name,
Whose bosom reverence for the gods restrains,
Would ever think of? Will he force employ
To tear me from this consecrated fane?
Then will I call the gods, and chiefly thee,
Diana, goddess resolute, to aid me;

Thyself a virgin, thou'lt a virgin shield,
And succor to thy priestess gladly yield.

Ark.—Be tranquil! Passion, and youth's fiery blood
Impel not Thoas rashly to commit
A deed so lawless. In his present mood,
I fear from him another harsh resolve,
Which (for his soul is steadfast and unmov'd)
He then will execute without delay.
Therefore I pray thee, canst thou grant no more,
At least be grateful—give thy confidence.

Iph.—Oh, tell me what is further known to thee.

Ark.—Learn it from him. I see the king approach;
Thou honor'st him, and thy own heart will prompt thee
To meet him kindly and with confidence.
A noble man by woman's gentle word
May oft be led.

Iph.—(Alone.) I see not how I can
Follow the counsel of my faithful friend.
But willingly the duty I perform
Of giving thanks for benefits receiv'd,
And much I wish that to the king my lips
With truth could utter what would please his ear.

SCENE III.

Iphigenia, Thoas.

Iph.—Her royal gifts the goddess shower on thee!
Imparting conquest, wealth, and high renown,
Dominion, and the welfare of thy house,
With the fulfillment of each pious wish,
That thou, who over numbers rul'st supreme,
Thyself may'st be supreme in happiness!

Thoas.—Contented were I with my people's praise;
My conquests others more than I enjoy.
Oh! be he king or subject, he's most blest,
Who in his home finds happiness and peace.
Thou shar'dst my sorrow, when a hostile sword
Tore from my side my last, my dearest son;

Long as fierce vengeance occupied my heart,
I did not feel my dwelling's dreary void;
But now, returning home, my rage appeas'd,
My foes defeated, and my son aveng'd,
I find there nothing left to comfort me.
The glad obedience, which I used to see
Kindling in every eye, is smothered now
In discontent and gloom; each, pond'ring, weighs
The changes which a future day may bring,
And serves the childless king because compell'd.
To-day I come within this sacred fane,
Which I have often enter'd to implore
And thank the gods for conquest. In my breast
I bear an old and fondly cherish'd wish,
To which methinks thou canst not be a stranger;
Thee, maid, a blessing to myself and realm,
I hope, as bride, to carry to my home.

Iph.—Too great thine offer, king, to one unknown;
Abash'd the fugitive before thee stands,
Who on this shore sought only what thou gav'st,
Safety and peace.

Tho.— Thus still to shroud thyself
From me, as from the lowest, in the veil
Of mystery which wrapp'd thy coming here,
Would in no country be deem'd just or right.
Strangers this shore appall'd; 'twas so ordain'd
Alike by law and stern necessity.
From thee alone—a kindly welcom'd guest,
Who hast enjoy'd each hallow'd privilege,
And spent thy days in freedom unrestrain'd—
From thee I hop'd that confidence to gain
Which every faithful host may justly claim.

Iph.—If I conceal'd, O king, my name, my race,
'Twas fear that prompted me, and not mistrust.
For didst thou know who stands before thee now,
And what accursed head thy arm protects,
A shudd'ring horror would possess thy heart;
And, far from wishing me to share thy throne,
Thou, ere the time appointed, from thy realm

Wouldst banish me perchance, and thrust me forth,
Before a glad reunion with my friends
And period to my wand'rings is ordain'd,
To meet that sorrow, which in every clime,
With cold, inhospitable, fearful hand,
Awaits the outcast, exil'd from his home.

Tho.—Whate'er respecting thee the gods decree,
Whate'er their doom for thee and for thy house,
Since thou hast dwelt among us and enjoy'd
The privilege the pious stranger claims,
To me hath fail'd no blessing sent from heaven;
And to persuade me, that protecting thee
I shield a guilty head, were hard indeed.

Iph.—Thy bounty, not the guest, draws blessings down.

Tho.—The kindness shown the wicked is not blest.
End then thy silence, priestess; not unjust
Is he who doth demand it. In my hands
The goddess placed thee; thou hast been to me
As sacred as to her, and her behest
Shall for the future also be my law.
If thou canst hope in safety to return
Back to thy kindred, I renounce my claims:
But is thy homeward path forever clos'd—
Or doth thy race in hopeless exile rove,
Or lie extinguished by some mighty woe—
Then may I claim thee by more laws than one.
Speak openly, thou know'st I keep my word.

Iph.—Its ancient bands reluctantly my tongue
Doth loose, a long-hid secret to divulge;
For once imparted, it resumes no more
The safe asylum of the inmost heart,
But thenceforth, as the powers above decree,
Doth work its ministry of weal or woe.
Attend! I issue from the Titan's race.

Tho.—A word momentous calmly hast thou spoken.
Him nam'st thou ancestor whom all the world
Knows as a sometime favorite of the gods?
Is it that Tantalus, whom Jove himself
Drew to his council and his social board?

On whose experienc'd words, with wisdom fraught,
As on the language of an oracle,
E'en gods delighted hung?

Iph.— 'Tis even he;
But gods should not hold intercourse with men
As with themselves. Too weak the human race,
Not to grow dizzy on unwonted heights.
Ignoble was he not, and no betrayer;
To be the Thunderer's slave, he was too great;
To be his friend and comrade—but a man.
His crime was human, and their doom severe;
For poets sing, that treachery and pride
Did from Jove's table hurl him headlong down,
To grovel in the depths of Tartarus.
Alas, and his whole race their hate pursues.

Tho.—Bear they their own guilt, or their ancestors'?

Iph.—The Titan's mighty breast and nervous frame
Was his descendant's certain heritage;
But round their brow Jove forg'd a band of brass.
Wisdom and patience, prudence and restraint,
He from their gloomy, fearful eye conceal'd;
In them each passion grew to savage rage,
And headlong rush'd uncheck'd. The Titan's son,
The strong-will'd Pelops, won his beauteous bride,
Hippodamia, child of Œnomaus,
Through treachery and murder; she ere long
Bore him two children, Atreus and Thyestes;
With envy they beheld the growing love
Their father cherish'd for a first-born son
Sprung from another union. Bound by hate,
In secret they contrive their brother's death.
The sire, the crime imputing to his wife,
With savage fury claim'd from her his child,
And she in terror did destroy herself——

Tho.—Thou'rt silent? Pause not in thy narrative!
Do not repent thy confidence—say on!

Iph.—How blest is he who his progenitors
With pride remembers, to the list'ner tells
The story of their greatness, of their deeds,

And, silently rejoicing, sees himself
Link'd to this goodly chain! For the same stock
Bears not the monster and the demigod:
A line, or good or evil, ushers in
The glory or the terror of the world.—
After the death of Pelops, his two sons
Rul'd o'er the city with divided sway.
But such an union could not long endure.
His brother's honor first Thyestes wounds.
In vengeance Atreus drove him from the realm.
Thyestes, planning horrors, long before
Had stealthily procur'd his brother's son,
Whom he in secret nurtur'd as his own.
Revenge and fury in his breast he pour'd,
Then to the royal city sent him forth,
That in his uncle he might slay his sire.
The meditated murder was disclos'd,
And by the king most cruelly aveng'd,
Who slaughter'd, as he thought, his brother's son.
Too late he learn'd whose dying tortures met
His drunken gaze; and seeking to assuage
The insatiate vengeance that possessed his soul,
He plann'd a deed unheard of. He assum'd
A friendly tone, seem'd reconcil'd, appeas'd,
And lured his brother, with his children twain,
Back to his kingdom; these he seiz'd and slew;
Then plac'd the loathsome and abhorrent food
At his first meal before the unconscious sire.
And when Thyestes had his hunger still'd
With his own flesh, a sadness seiz'd his soul;
He for his children ask'd—their steps, their voice
Fancied he heard already at the door;
And Atreus, grinning with malicious joy,
Threw in the members of the slaughter'd boys.—
Shudd'ring, O king, thou dost avert thy face:
So did the sun his radiant visage hide,
And swerve his chariot from the eternal path.
These, monarch, are thy priestess' ancestors,
And many a dreadful fate of mortal doom,
And many a deed of the bewilder'd brain,

Dark night doth cover with her sable wing,
Or shroud in gloomy twilight.

Tho.— Hidden there
Let them abide. A truce to horror now,
And tell me by what miracle thou sprang'st
From race so savage.

Iph.— Atreus' eldest son
Was Agamemnon; he, O king, my sire:
But I may say with truth, that, from a child,
In him the model of a perfect man
I witness'd ever. Clytemnestra bore
To him, myself, the firstling of their love,
Electra then. Peaceful the monarch rul'd,
And to the house of Tantalus was given
A long-withheld repose. A son alone
Was wanting to complete my parents' bliss;
Scarce was this wish fulfill'd, and young Orestes,
The household's darling, with his sisters grew,
When new misfortunes vex'd our ancient house.
To you hath come the rumor of the war,
Which, to avenge the fairest woman's wrongs,
The force united of the Grecian kings
Round Ilion's walls encamp'd. Whether the town
Was humbl'd, and achiev'd their great revenge
I have not heard. My father led the host.
In Aulis vainly for a favoring gale
They waited; for, enrag'd against their chief,
Diana stay'd their progress, and requir'd,
Through Chalcas' voice, the monarch's eldest daughter.
They lur'd me with my mother to the camp,
And at Diana's altar doom'd this head.—
She was appeas'd, she did not wish my blood,
And wrapt me in a soft protecting cloud;
Within this temple from the dream of death
I waken'd first. Yes, I myself am she;
Iphigenia—I who speak to thee
Am Atreus' grandchild, Agamemnon's child,
And great Diana's consecrated priestess.

Tho.—I yield no higher honor or regard
To the king's daughter than the maid unknown;

Once more my first proposal I repeat;
Come, follow me, and share what I possess.

Iph.—How dare I venture such a step, O king?
Hath not the goddess who protected me
Alone a right to my devoted head?
'Twas she who chose for me this sanctuary,
Where she perchance reserves me for my sire,
By my apparent death enough chastis'd,
To be the joy and solace of his age.
Perchance my glad return is near; and how
If I, unmindful of her purposes,
Had here attach'd myself against her will?
I ask'd a signal, did she wish my stay.

Tho.—The signal is that still thou tarriest here.
Seek not evasively such vain pretexts.
Not many words are needed to refuse,
By the refus'd the no alone is heard.

Iph.—Mine are not words meant only to deceive;
I have to thee my inmost heart reveal'd.
And doth no inward voice suggest to thee,
How I with yearning soul must pine to see
My father, mother, and my long-lost home?
Oh, let thy vessels bear me thither, king!
That in the ancient halls, where sorrow still
In accents low doth fondly breathe my name,
Joy, as in welcome of a new-born child,
May round the columns twine the fairest wreath.
Thou wouldst to me and mine new life impart.

Tho.—Then go! the promptings of thy heart obey;
Despise the voice of reason and good counsel.
Be quite the woman, sway'd by each desire,
That bridleless drives her ever to and fro,
When passion rages fiercely in her breast,
No sacred tie withholds her from the wretch
Who would allure her to forsake for him
A husband's or a father's guardian arms;
Extinct within her heart its fiery glow,
The golden tongue of eloquence in vain
With words of truth and power assails her ear.

Iph.—Remember now, O king, thy noble words!
My trust and candor wilt thou thus repay?
Thou seem'dst, methought, prepar'd to hear the truth.

Tho.—For this unlook'd-for answer not prepar'd.
Yet 'twas to be expected; knew I not
That 'twas with woman I had now to deal?

Iph.—Upbraid not thus, O king, our feeble sex!
Though not in dignity to match with yours,
The weapons woman wields are not ignoble.
And trust me, Thoas, in thy happiness
I have a deeper insight than thyself.
Thou thinkest, ignorant alike of both,
A closer union would augment our bliss;
Inspir'd with confidence and honest zeal
Thou strongly urgest me to yield consent;
And here I thank the gods, who give me strength
To shun a doom unratified by them.

Tho.—'Tis not a god, 'tis thine own heart that speaks.

Iph.—'Tis through the heart alone they speak to us.

Tho.—To hear them have I not an equal right?

Iph.—The raging tempest drowns the still, small voice.

Tho.—This voice, no doubt, the priestess hears alone.

Iph.—Before all others should the prince attend it.

Tho.—Thy sacred office, and ancestral right
To Jove's own table, place thee with the gods
In closer union than an earth-born savage.

Iph.—Thus must I now the confidence atone
Thyself extorted from me!

Tho.— I'm a man,
And better 'tis we end this conference.
Hear then my last resolve. Be priestess still
Of the great goddess who selected thee;
And may she pardon me, that I from her,
Unjustly and with secret self-reproach,
Her ancient sacrifice so long withheld.
From olden times no stranger near'd our shore
But fell a victim at her sacred shrine.
But thou, with kind affection (which at times

Seem'd like a gentle daughter's tender love,
At times assum'd to my enraptur'd heart
The modest inclination of a bride),
Didst so enthrall me, as with magic bonds,
That I forgot my duty. Thou didst rock
My senses in a dream: I did not hear
My people's murmurs: now they cry aloud,
Ascribing my poor son's untimely death
To this my guilt. No longer for thy sake
Will I oppose the wishes of the crowd,
Who urgently demand the sacrifice.

Iph.—For mine own sake I ne'er desired it from thee.
Who to the gods ascribe a thirst for blood
Do misconceive their nature, and impute
To them their own inhuman dark desires.
Did not Diana snatch me from the priest,
Preferring my poor service to my death?

Tho.—'Tis not for us, on reason's shifting grounds,
Lightly to guide and construe rites divine.
Perform thy duty; I'll accomplish mine.
Two strangers, whom in caverns of the shore
We found conceal'd, and whose arrival here
Bodes to my realm no good, are in my power.
With them thy goddess may once more resume
Her ancient, pious, long-suspended rites!
I send them here—thy duty not unknown. (Exit.)

Iph.—(Alone.) Gracious protectress! thou hast clouds
To shelter innocence distress'd,
And genial gales from fate's rude grasp,
Safely to waft her o'er the sea,
O'er the wide earth's remotest realms,
Where'er it seemeth good to thee.
Wise art thou—thine all-seeing eye
The future and the past surveys,
And doth on all thy children rest,
E'en as thy pure and guardian light
Keeps o'er the earth its silent watch,
The beauty and the life of night.
O Goddess! keep my hands from blood!

Blessing it never brings, nor peace;
And still in evil hours the form
Of the chance-murder'd man appears
To fill the unwilling murderer's soul
With horrible and gloomy fears.
For fondly the immortals view
Man's widely scatter'd, simple race;
And the poor mortal's transient life
Gladly prolong, that he may raise
Awhile to their eternal heavens
His sympathetic joyous gaze.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Orestes, Pylades.

Orestes.—It is the path of death that now we tread:
At every step my soul grows more serene.
When I implor'd Apollo to remove
The grisly band of Furies from my side,
He seem'd, with hope-inspiring, godlike words,
To promise aid and safety in the fane
Of his lov'd sister, who o'er Tauris rules.
Thus the prophetic word fulfils itself,
That with my life shall terminate my woe.
How easy 'tis for me, whose heart is crush'd,
Whose sense is deaden'd by a hand divine,
Thus to renounce the beauteous light of day!
And must the son of Atreus not entwine
The wreath of conquest round his dying brow—
Must I, as my forefathers, as my sire,
Bleed like a victim—an ignoble death—
So be it! Better at the altar here,
Than in a nook obscure, where kindred hands
Have spread assassination's wily net.
Yield me this brief repose, infernal powers!
Ye, who, like loosen'd hounds, still scent the blood
Which, trickling from my feet, betrays my path.
Leave me! ere long I come to you below.
Nor you, nor I, should view the light of day.

The soft green carpet of the beauteous earth
Is no arena for unhallow'd fiends.
Below I seek you, where an equal fate
Binds all in murky, never-ending night.
Thee only, thee, my Pylades, my friend,
The guiltless partner of my crime and curse,
Thee am I loath, before thy time, to take
To yonder cheerless shore! Thy life or death
Alone awakens in me hope or fear.

Pylades.—Like thee, Orestes, I am not prepar'd
Downward to wander to yon realm of shade.
I purpose still, through the entangl'd paths,
Which seem as they would lead to blackest night,
Again to guide our upward way to life.
Of death I think not; I observe and mark
Whether the gods may not perchance present
Means and fit moment for a joyful flight.
Dreaded or not, the stroke of death must come;
And though the priestess stood with hand uprais'd,
Prepar'd to cut our consecrated locks,
Our safety still should be my only thought:
Uplift thy soul above this weak despair;
Desponding doubts but hasten on our peril.
Apollo pledg'd to us his sacred word,
That in his sister's holy fane for thee
Were comfort, aid, and glad return prepar'd.
The words of heaven are not equivocal,
As in despair the poor oppress'd one thinks.

Ores.—The mystic web of life my mother spread
Around my infant head, and so I grew,
An image of my sire; and my mute look
Was aye a bitter and a keen reproof
To her and base Egisthus. Oh, how oft,
When silently within our gloomy hall
Electra sat, and mused beside the fire,
Have I with anguish'd spirit climb'd her knee,
And watch'd her bitter tears with sad amaze!
Then would she tell me of our noble sire:
How much I long'd to see him—be with him!

Myself at Troy one moment fondly wish'd,
My sire's return, the next. The day arrived——

Pyl.—Oh, of that awful hour let fiends of hell
Hold nightly converse! Of a time more fair
May the remembrance animate our hearts
To fresh heroic deeds. The gods require
On this wide earth the service of the good,
To work their pleasure. Still they count on thee;
For in thy father's train they sent thee not,
When he to Orcus went unwilling down.

Ores.—Would I had seiz'd the border of his robe,
And follow'd him!

Pyl.— They kindly car'd for me
Who here detain'd thee; for if thou hadst died
I know not what had then become of me;
Since I with thee, and for thy sake alone,
Have from my childhood liv'd, and wish to live.

Ores.—Do not remind me of those tranquil days,
When me thy home a safe asylum gave;
With fond solicitude thy noble sire
The half-nipp'd, tender flow'ret gently rear'd;
While thou, a friend and playmate always gay,
Like to a light and brilliant butterfly
Around a dusky flower, didst around me
Still with new life thy merry gambols play,
And breathe thy joyous spirit in my soul,
Until, my cares forgetting, I with thee
Was lur'd to snatch the eager joys of youth.

Pyl.—My very life began when thee I lov'd.

Ores.—Say then thy woes began, and thou speak'st truly.
This is the sharpest sorrow of my lot,
That, like a plague-infected wretch, I bear
Death and destruction hid within my breast;
That, where I tread, e'en on the healthiest spot,
Ere long the blooming faces round betray
The writhing features of a ling'ring death.

Pyl.—Were thy breath venom, I had been the first
To die that death, Orestes. Am I not,
As ever, full of courage and of joy?

And love and courage are the spirit's wings
Wafting to noble actions.

Ores.— Noble actions?
Time was, when fancy painted such before us!
When oft, the game pursuing, on we roam'd
O'er hill and valley; hoping that ere long
With club and weapon arm'd, we so might track
The robber to his den, or monster huge.
And then at twilight, by the glassy sea,
We peaceful sat, reclin'd against each other
The waves came dancing to our very feet,
And all before us lay the wide, wide world.
Then on a sudden one would seize his sword,
And future deeds shone round us like the stars,
Which gemm'd in countless throngs the vault of night.

Pyl.—Endless, my friend, the projects which the soul
Burns to accomplish. We would every deed
At once perform as grandly as it shows
After long ages, when from land to land
The poet's swelling song hath roll'd it on.
It sounds so lovely what our fathers did,
When, in the silent evening shade reclin'd,
We drink it in with music's melting tones;
And what we do is, as their deeds to them,
Toilsome and incomplete!
Thus we pursue what always flies before;
We disregard the path in which we tread,
Scarce see around the footsteps of our sires,
Or heed the trace of their career on earth.
We ever hasten on to chase their shades,
Which godlike, at a distance far remote,
On golden clouds reclin'd, the mountains crown.
The man I prize not who esteems himself
Just as the people's breath may chance to raise him.
But thou, Orestes, to the gods give thanks,
That they have done so much through thee already.

Ores.—When they ordain a man to noble deeds,
To shield from dire calamity his friends,
Extend his empire, or protect its bounds,
Or put to flight its ancient enemies,

Let him be grateful! For to him a god
Imparts the first, the sweetest joy of life.
Me have they doom'd to be a slaughterer,
To be an honor'd mother's murderer,
And shamefully a deed of shame avenging,
Me through their own decree they have o'erwhelm'd.
Trust me, the race of Tantalus is doom'd;
Nor may his last descendant leave the earth,
Or crown'd with honor or unstain'd by crime.

Pyl.—The gods avenge not on the son the deeds
Done by the father. Each, or good or bad,
Of his own actions reaps the due reward.
The parents' blessing, not their curse, descends.

Ores.—Methinks their blessing did not lead us here.

Pyl.—It was at least the mighty gods' decree.

Ores.—Then is it their decree which doth destroy us.

Pyl.—Perform what they command, and wait the event.
Do thou Apollo's sister bear from hence,
That they at Delphi may united dwell,
Rever'd and honor'd by a noble race:
Thee, for this deed, the heav'nly pair will view
With gracious eye, and from the hateful grasp
Of the infernal powers will rescue thee.
E'en now none dares intrude within this grove.

Ores.—So shall I die at least a peaceful death.

Pyl.—Far other are my thoughts, and not unskill'd
Have I the future and the past combin'd
In quiet meditation. Long, perchance,
Hath ripen'd in the counsel of the gods
The great event. Diana wish'd to leave
This savage region foul with human blood:
We were selected for the high emprize;
To us it is assign'd, and strangely thus
We are conducted to the threshold here.

Ores.—My friend, with wondrous skill thou link'st thy wish
With the predestin'd purpose of the gods.

Pyl.—Of what avail is prudence, if it fail
Heedful to mark the purposes of heaven?

A noble man, who much hath sinn'd, some god
Doth summon to a dangerous enterprise,
Which to achieve appears impossible.
The hero conquers, and atoning serves
Mortals and gods, who thenceforth honor him.

Ores.—Am I foredoom'd to action and to life,
Would that a god from my distemper'd brain
Might chase this dizzy fever, which impels
My restless steps along a slipp'ry path,
Stain'd with a mother's blood, to direful death;
And pitying, dry the fountain, whence the blood,
Forever spouting from a mother's wounds,
Eternally defiles me!

Pyl.— Wait in peace!
Thou dost increase the evil, and dost take
The office of the Furies on thyself.
Let me contrive—be still! And when at length
The time for action claims our powers combin'd,
Then will I summon thee, and on we'll stride,
With cautious boldness to achieve the event.

Ores.—I hear Ulysses speak!

Pyl.— Nay, mock me not.
Each must select the hero after whom
To climb the steep and difficult ascent
Of high Olympus. And to me it seems
That him nor stratagem nor art defiles
Who consecrates himself to noble deeds.

Ores.—I most esteem the brave and upright man.

Pyl.—And therefore have I not desir'd thy counsel.
One step is ta'en already: from our guards
I have extorted this intelligence.
A strange and godlike woman now restrains
The execution of that bloody law:
Incense, and prayer, and an unsullied heart,
These are the gifts she offers to the gods.
Her fame is widely spread, and it is thought
That from the race of Amazons she springs,
And hither fled some great calamity.

Ores.—Her gentle sway, it seems, lost all its power

At the approach of one so criminal,
Whom the dire curse enshrouds in gloomy night.
Our doom to seal, the pious thirst for blood
Again unchains the ancient cruel rite:
The monarch's savage will decrees our death;
A woman cannot save when he condemns.

Pyl.—That 'tis a woman is a ground for hope!
A man, the very best, with cruelty
At length may so familiarize his mind,
His character through custom so transform,
That he shall come to make himself a law
Of what at first his very soul abhorr'd.
But woman doth retain the stamp of mind
She first assum'd. On her we may depend
In good or evil with more certainty.
She comes; leave us alone. I dare not tell
At once our names, nor unreserv'd confide
Our fortunes to her. Now retire awhile,
And ere she speaks with thee we'll meet again.

SCENE II.

Iphigenia, Pylades.

Iphigenia.—Whence art thou? Stranger, speak! To me thy bearing
Stamps thee of Grecian, not of Scythian race.
(She unbinds his chains.)
The freedom that I give is dangerous:
The gods avert the doom that threatens you!

Pylades.—Delicious music! dearly welcome tones
Of our own language in a foreign land!
With joy my captive eye once more beholds
The azure mountains of my native coast.
Oh, let this joy that I too am a Greek
Convince thee, priestess! How I need thine aid,
A moment I forget, my spirit wrapt
In contemplation of so fair a vision.
If fate's dread mandate doth not seal thy lips,

From which of our illustrious races, say,
Dost thou thy godlike origin derive?

Iph.—A priestess, by the Goddess' self ordain'd
And consecrated too, doth speak with thee.
Let that suffice: but tell me, who art thou,
And what unbless'd o'erruling destiny
Hath hither led thee with thy friend?

Pyl.— The woe,
Whose hateful presence ever dogs our steps,
I can with ease relate. Oh, would that thou
Couldst with like ease, divine one, shed on us
One ray of cheering hope! We are from Crete,
Adrastus' sons, and I, the youngest born,
Named Cephalus; my eldest brother, he,
Loadamus. Between us two a youth
Of savage temper grew, who oft disturb'd
The joy and concord of our youthful sports.
Long as our father led his powers at Troy,
Passive our mother's mandate we obey'd;
But when, enrich'd with booty, he return'd,
And shortly after died, a contest fierce
For the succession and their father's wealth,
Parted the brothers. I the eldest joined;
He slew the second; and the Furies hence
For kindred murder dog his restless steps.
But to this savage shore the Delphian god
Hath sent us, cheer'd by hope, commanding us
Within his sister's temple to await
The blessed hand of aid. We have been ta'en,
Brought hither, and now stand for sacrifice.
My tale is told.

Iph.— Tell me, is Troy o'erthrown?
Assure me of its fall.

Pyl.— It lies in ruins.
But oh, insure deliverance to us!
Hasten, I pray, the promis'd aid of heav'n.
Pity my brother, say a kindly word;
But I implore thee, spare him when thou speakest.
Too easily his inner mind is torn
By joy, or grief, or cruel memory.

A feverish madness oft doth seize on him,
Yielding his spirit, beautiful and free,
A prey to furies.

Iph.— Great as is thy woe,
Forget it, I conjure thee, for a while,
Till I am satisfied.

Pyl.— The stately town,
Which ten long years withstood the Grecian host,
Now lies in ruins, ne'er to rise again;
Yet many a hero's grave will oft recall
Our sad remembrance to that barbarous shore;
There lies Achilles and his noble friend.

Iph.—And are ye, godlike forms, reduc'd to dust!

Pyl.—Nor Palamede, nor Ajax, e'er again
The daylight of their native land behold.

Iph.—He speaks not of my father, doth not name
Him with the fallen. He may yet survive!
I may behold him! still hope on, my heart!

Pyl.—Yet happy are the thousands who receiv'd
Their bitter death-blow from a hostile hand!
For terror wild, and end most tragical,
Some hostile, angry deity prepar'd,
Instead of triumph, for the home-returning.
Do human voices never reach this shore?
Far as their sound extends, they bear the fame
Of deeds unparallel'd. And is the woe
Which fills Mycene's halls with ceaseless sighs
To thee a secret still?—And know'st thou not
That Clytemnestra, with Ægisthus' aid,
Her royal consort artfully ensnar'd,
And murder'd on the day of his return?—
The monarch's house thou honorest! I perceive
Thy heaving bosom vainly doth contend
With tidings fraught with such unlook'd-for woe.
Art thou the daughter of a friend? or born
Within the circuit of Mycene's walls?
Do not conceal it, or avenge on me
That here the horrid crime I first announc'd.

Iph.—Proceed, and tell me how the deed was done.

Pyl.—The day of his return, as from the bath
Arose the monarch, tranquil and refresh'd,
His robe demanding from his consort's hand,
A tangl'd garment, complicate with folds,
She o'er his shoulders flung and noble head;
And when, as from a net, he vainly strove
To extricate himself, the traitor, base
Ægisthus, smote him, and envelop'd thus
Great Agamemnon sought the shades below.

Iph.—And what reward receiv'd the base accomplice?

Pyl.—A queen and kingdom he possess'd already.

Iph.—Base passion prompted, then, the deed of shame?

Pyl.—And feelings, cherish'd long, of deep revenge.

Iph.—How had the monarch injured Clytemnestra?

Pyl.—By such a dreadful deed, that if on earth
Aught could exculpate murder, it were this.
To Aulis he allur'd her, when the fleet
With unpropitious winds the goddess stay'd;
And there, a victim at Diana's shrine,
The monarch, for the welfare of the Greeks,
Her eldest daughter doom'd. And this, 'tis said,
Planted such deep abhorrence in her heart,
That to Ægisthus she resign'd herself,
And round her husband flung the web of death.

Iph.—(Veiling herself.) It is enough! Thou wilt again behold me.

Pyl.—(Alone.) The fortune of this royal house, it seems,
Doth move her deeply. Whosoe'er she be,
She must herself have known the monarch well;
For our good fortune, from a noble house.
She hath been sold to bondage. Peace, my heart!
And let us steer our course with prudent zeal
Toward the star of hope which gleams upon us.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Iphigenia, Orestes.

Iphigenia.—Unhappy man, I only loose thy bonds
In token of a still severer doom.

The freedom which the sanctuary imparts,
Like the last life-gleam o'er the dying face,
But heralds death. I cannot, dare not say
Your doom is hopeless; for, with murd'rous hand,
Could I inflict the fatal blow myself?
And while I here am priestess of Diana,
None, be he who he may, dare touch your heads.
But the incensed king, should I refuse
Compliance with the rites himself enjoin'd,
Will choose another virgin from my train
As my successor. Then, alas! with naught,
Save ardent wishes, can I succor you,
Much-honor'd countryman! The humblest slave,
Who had but near'd our sacred household hearth,
Is dearly welcome in a foreign land;
How with proportion'd joy and blessing, then,
Shall I receive the man who doth recall
The image of the heroes, whom I learn'd
To honor from my parents, and who cheers
My inmost heart with flatt'ring gleams of hope!

Orestes.—Does prudent forethought prompt thee to conceal
Thy name and race? or may I hope to know
Who, like a heavenly vision, meets me thus?

Iph.—Yes, thou shalt know me. Now conclude the tale
Of which thy brother only told me half:
Relate their end, who coming home from Troy,
On their own threshold met a doom severe
And most unlook'd for. I, though but a child
When first conducted hither, well recall
The timid glance of wonder which I cast
On those heroic forms. When they went forth,
It seem'd as though Olympus from her womb
Had cast the heroes of a by-gone world,
To frighten Ilion; and, above them all,
Great Agamemnon tower'd preëminent!
Oh, tell me! Fell the hero in his home,
Through Clytemnestra's and Ægisthus' wiles?

Ores.—He fell!

Iph.— Unblest Mycene! Thus the sons

Of Tantalus, with barbarous hands, have sown
Curse upon curse; and, as the shaken weed
Scatters around a thousand poison-seeds,
So they assassins ceaseless generate,
Their children's children ruthless to destroy.—
Now tell the remnant of thy brother's tale,
Which horror darkly hid from me before.
How did the last descendant of the race—
The gentle child, to whom the gods assign'd
The office of avenger—how did he
Escape that day of blood? Did equal fate
Around Orestes throw Avernus' net?
Say, was he saved? and is he still alive?
And lives Electra, too?

Ores.— They both survive.

Iph.—Golden Apollo, lend thy choicest beams!
Lay them an offering at the throne of Jove!
For I am poor and dumb.

Ores.— If social bonds
Or ties more close connect thee with this house,
As this joy evinces, rein thy heart;
For insupportable the sudden plunge
From happiness to sorrow's gloomy depth.
As yet thou only know'st the hero's death.

Iph.—And is not this intelligence enough?

Ores.—Half of the horror yet remains untold.

Iph.—Electra and Orestes both survive,
What have I then to fear?

Ores.— And fear'st thou naught
For Clytemnestra?

Iph.— Her, nor hope nor fear
Have power to save.

Ores.— She to the land of hope
Hath bid farewell.

Iph.— Did her repentant hand
Shed her own blood?

Ores.— Not so; yet her own blood
Inflicted death.

Iph.— Speak less ambiguously.
Uncertainty around my anxious head
Her dusky, thousand-folded pinion waves.

Ores.—Have then the powers above selected me
To be the herald of a dreadful deed,
Which, in the drear and soundless realms of night,
I fain would hide forever? 'Gainst my will
Thy gentle voice constrains me; it demands,
And shall receive, a tale of direst woe.
Electra, on the day when fell her sire,
Her brother from impending doom conceal'd;
Him Strophius, his father's relative,
With kindest care receiv'd, and rear'd the child
With his own son, named Pylades, who soon
Around the stranger twin'd the bonds of love.
And as they grew, within their inmost souls
There sprang the burning longing to revenge
The monarch's death. Unlook'd for, and disguis'd,
They reach Mycene, feigning to have brought
The mournful tidings of Orestes' death,
Together with his ashes. Them the queen
Gladly receives. Within the house they enter;
Orestes to Electra shows himself:
She fans the fires of vengeance into flame,
Which in the sacred presence of a mother
Had burn'd more dimly. Silently she leads
Her brother to the spot where fell their sire;
Where lurid blood-marks, on the oft-wash'd floor,
With pallid streaks, anticipate revenge.
With fiery eloquence she pictures forth
Each circumstance of that atrocious deed—
Her own oppress'd and miserable life,
The prosperous traitor's insolent demeanor,
The perils threat'ning Agamemnon's race
From her who had become their stepmother;
Then in his hand the ancient dagger thrusts,
Which often in the house of Tantalus
With savage fury rag'd—and by her son
Is Clytemnestra slain.

Iph.— Immortal powers!

Whose pure and blest existence glides away
'Mid ever-shifting clouds, me have ye kept
So many years secluded from the world,
Retain'd me near yourselves, consign'd to me
The childlike task to feed the sacred fire,
And taught my spirit, like the hallow'd flame,
With never-clouded brightness to aspire
To your pure mansions—but at length to feel
With keener woe the misery of my house?
Oh, tell me of the poor unfortunate!
Speak of Orestes!

Ores.— Would that he were dead!
Forth from his mother's blood her ghost arose,
And to the ancient daughters of the night
Cries: "Let him not escape—the matricide!
Pursue the victim, dedicate to you!"
They hear, and glare around with hollow eyes,
Like greedy eagles. In their murky dens
They stir themselves, and from the corners creep
Their comrades, dire remorse and pallid fear;
Before them fumes a mist of Acheron;
Perplexingly around the murderer's brow
The eternal contemplation of the past
Rolls in its cloudy circles. Once again
The grisly band, commission'd to destroy,
Pollute earth's beautiful and heaven-sown fields,
From which an ancient curse had banish'd them.
Their rapid feet the fugitive pursue;
They only pause to start a wilder fear.

Iph.—Unhappy one; thy lot resembles his,
Thou feel'st what he, poor fugitive, must suffer.

Ores.—What say'st thou? why presume my fate like his?

Iph.—A brother's murder weighs upon thy soul;
Thy younger brother told the mournful tale.

Ores.—I cannot suffer that thy noble soul
Should be deceiv'd by error. Rich in guile,
And practis'd in deceit, a stranger may
A web of falsehood cunningly devise
To snare a stranger; between us be truth.

I am Orestes! and this guilty head
Is stooping to the tomb, and covets death;
It will be welcome now in any shape.
Whoe'er thou art, for thee and for my friend
I wish deliverance; I desire it not.
Thou seem'st to linger here against thy will;
Contrive some means of flight, and leave me here:
My lifeless corpse hurl'd headlong from the rock,
My blood shall mingle with the dashing waves,
And bring a curse upon this barbarous shore!
Return together home to lovely Greece,
With joy a new existence to commence.

(Orestes retires.)

Iph.—At length Fulfilment, fairest child of Jove,
Thou dost descend upon me from on high!
How vast thine image! scarce my straining eye
Can reach thy hands, which, fill'd with golden fruit
And wreaths of blessing, from Olympus' height
Showers treasures down. As by his bounteous gifts
We recognize the monarch (for what seems
To thousands opulence is naught to him),
So ye, ye heavenly powers, are also known
By bounty long withheld, and wisely plann'd.
Ye only know what things are good for us;
Ye view the future's wide-extended realm;
While from our eye a dim or starry veil
The prospect shrouds. Calmly ye hear our prayers,
When we like children sue for greater speed.
Not immature ye pluck heaven's golden fruit;
And woe to him, who with impatient hand,
His date of joy forestalling, gathers death.
Let not this long-awaited happiness,
Which yet my heart hath scarcely realiz'd,
Like to the shadow of departed friends,
Glide vainly by with triple sorrow fraught!

Ores.—(Returning.) Dost thou for Pylades and for thyself
Implore the gods, blend not my name with yours;
Thou wilt not save the wretch whom thou wouldst join,
But wilt participate his curse and woe.

Iph.—My destiny is firmly bound to thine.

Ores.—No, say not so; alone and unattended
Let me descend to Hades. Though thou shouldst
In thine own veil enwrap the guilty one,
Thou couldst not shroud him from his wakeful foes;
And e'en thy sacred presence, heavenly maid,
Drives them aside, but scares them not away.
With brazen impious feet they dare not tread
Within the precincts of this sacred grove:
Yet in the distance, ever and anon,
I hear their horrid laughter, like the howl
Of famish'd wolves, beneath the tree wherein
The traveller hides. Without, encamp'd they lie,
And should I quit this consecrated grove,
Shaking their serpent locks, they would arise,
And, raising clouds of dust on every side,
Ceaseless pursue their miserable prey.

Iph.—Orestes, canst thou hear a friendly word?

Ores.—Reserve it for one favor'd by the gods.

Iph.—To thee they give anew the light of hope.

Ores.—Through clouds and smoke I see the feeble gleam
Of the death-stream which lights me down to hell.

Iph.—Hast thou one sister only, thy Electra?

Ores.—I knew but one: yet her kind destiny,
Which seem'd to us so terrible, betimes
Removed an elder sister from the woe
That dogs the race of Pelops. Cease, oh, cease
Thy questions, maiden, nor thus league thyself
With the Eumenides, who blow away,
With fiendish joy, the ashes from my soul,
Lest the last spark of horror's fiery brand
Should be extinguish'd there. Must then the fire,
Deliberately kindl'd and supplied
With hellish sulphur, never cease to sear
My tortur'd bosom?

Iph.— In the flame I throw
Sweet incense. Let the gentle breath of love,
Low murmuring, cool thy bosom's fiery glow.
Orestes, fondly lov'd—canst thou not hear me?
Hath the terrific Furies' grisly band

Completely dried the life-blood in thy veins?
Creeps there, as from Gorgon's direful head,
A petrifying charm through all thy limbs?
If hollow voices, from a mother's blood,
Call thee to hell, may not a sister's word
With benediction pure ascend to heaven,
And summon thence some gracious power to aid thee?

Ores.—She calls! she calls!—Thou too desir'st my death?
Is there a fury shrouded in thy form?
Who art thou, that thy voice thus horribly
Can harrow up my bosom's inmost depths?

Iph.—Thine inmost heart reveals it. I am she—
Iphigenia—look on me, Orestes!

Ores.—Thou!

Iph.— My own brother!

Ores.— Hence, away, begone!
Touch not these locks, I counsel thee; from me,
As from Creusa's bridal robe, proceeds
An unextinguishable fire. Depart!
Like Hercules, an ignominious death,
Unworthy wretch, lock'd in myself, I'll die.

Iph.—Thou shalt not perish! Would that I might hear
One quiet word from thee! dispel my doubts,
Make sure the bliss I have implor'd so long.
A wheel of joy and sorrow in my heart
Ceaseless revolves. With shy reserve I turn
From one unknown; but unto thee, my brother,
My inmost heart resistlessly impels me.

Ores.—Is this Lyæus' temple? Doth the glow
Of holy rage unbridl'd thus possess
The sacred priestess?

Iph.— Hear me, oh, look up!
See how my heart, which hath been clos'd so long,
Doth open to the bliss of seeing thee,
The dearest treasure that the world contains—
Of falling on thy neck, and folding thee
Within my longing arms, which have till now
Met the embraces of the empty wind.
Do not repulse me—the eternal spring,

Whose crystal waters from Parnassus flow,
Bounds not more gayly on from rock to rock,
Down to the golden vale, than from my heart
The waters of affection freely gush,
And round me form a circling sea of bliss.
Orestes! Oh, my brother!

Ores.— Lovely nymph!
Nor thy caresses, nor thyself I trust;
Diana claims attendants more severe,
And doth avenge her desecrated fane.
Remove thy circling arm! and if thou wilt
Safety and love upon a youth bestow,
Unto my friend, more worthy than myself,
Impart thy gifts; among yon rocks he roves;
Go seek him, guide him hence, and heed not me.

Iph.—Brother, command thyself, and better know
Thy new-found sister, nor misconstrue thus
Her pure and heav'nly joy. Ye gods, remove
From his fix'd eye delusion, lest this hour
Of highest bliss should make us trebly wretched!
Oh, she is here, thine own, thy long-lost sister,
Whom great Diana from the altar snatch'd,
And safely plac'd here in her sacred fane.
A captive thou, prepar'd for sacrifice,
And findest here a sister in the priestess.

Ores.—Accursed race! Now may the sun behold
Your final doom. Is not Electra here?
That she with us may perish, nor her life
For heavier doom and deeper woe reserve.
'Tis well—I follow, priestess! Fratricide
Is an old custom of our ancient house;
And you, ye gods, I thank, that ye resolve
Childless to root me hence. Thee let me counsel
To view too fondly neither sun nor stars.
Come, follow to the gloomy realms below!
As dragons, gender'd in the sulphur pool,
Swallow each other with voracious rage,
So our accursed race destroys itself.
Childless and guiltless come below with me!
There's pity in thy look! Oh, gaze not so—

'Twas with such looks that Clytemnestra sought
An entrance to her son Orestes' heart,
And yet his uprais'd arm her bosom pierc'd.
His mother fell!—Appear, indignant shade!
Within the circle step, ye fiends of hell,
Be present at the welcome spectacle,
The last, most horrible, that ye prepare!
Nor hate, nor vengeance, whets the poignard now,
A sister is constrain'd to deal the blow.
Weep not! Thy guiltless soul is free from crime.
From earliest infancy I naught have lov'd,
As thee I could have lov'd, my sister. Come,
The weapon raise, spare not, this bosom rend,
And make an outlet for its boiling streams!

(He sinks exhausted.)

Iph.—Alone I cannot bear this bliss and woe.
Where art thou, Pylades? Thine aid I need.

(Iphigenia retires.)

SCENE II.

Orestes.

Orestes.—(Recovering from his swoon and standing up.) Give yet another! reach from Lethe's stream
The last reviving draught of cool refreshment!
Soon shall its waters in my bosom still
Life's fitful fever; and my spirit then
Adown oblivion's stream shall glide to you,
Ye spirits, shrouded in eternal mist.
With tranquil pleasure in your deep repose
A weary son of earth may lave his soul!—
What whisp'ring sounds pervade the dreary grove?
What hollow murmurs haunt its twilight gloom?—
They gather round to view the stranger guest!
Who are yon troop in high communion met,
Like an assembl'd family of princes?
They mingle peacefully, of every age,
And either sex, yet are their godlike forms
Cast in a kindred mold. 'Tis they, 'tis they,
The fathers of my race! With Atreus,

In friendly converse glides Thyestes' shade,
And children playfully around them sport.
Is there no enmity among you now?
And is revenge extinguish'd with the sun?
I then am welcome, and may hope to join
Your solemn company. My fathers, hail!
Orestes, last descendant of your race,
Salutes you. What ye sow'd, that hath he reap'd;
Laden with curses he descends to you.
But burdens here are lighter far to bear.
Receive him, oh, receive him in your circle!
Thee, Atreus, I revere, and thee, Thyestes:
Here all are free from enmity and hate.—
Show me my father, whom I only once
In life beheld.—Art thou my father, thou,
My mother leading thus familiarly?
Dares Clytemnestra reach her hand to thee;
Then may Orestes also draw near her,
And say, behold thy son!—My ancestors,
Behold your son, and bid him welcome here.
Among the sons of ancient Tantalus,
A kind salute on earth was murder's watchword,
And all their joys commence beyond the grave.
Ye welcome me! Ye bid me join your circle!
Oh, lead me to my honor'd ancestor!
Where is the aged hero? that I may
Behold the dear, the venerable head,
Of him, who with the gods in council sat.
You seem to shudder and to turn away?
What may this mean? Suffers the godlike man?
Alas! the mighty gods, with ruthless hate,
To his heroic breast, with brazen chains,
Have cruel pangs indissolubly bound.

SCENE III.

Orestes, Iphigenia, Pylades.

Orestes.—How! are ye come already? Sister, welcome.
Electra still is missing; some kind god

With gentle arrow send her quickly hither.
Thee, my poor friend, I must compassionate!
Come with me, come to Pluto's gloomy throne,
There to salute our hosts like stranger guests.

Iphigenia.—Celestial pair, who from the realms above
By night and day shed down the beauteous light
To cheer mankind, but who may not illume
Departed spirits, save a mortal pair!
A brother and a sister's anguish pity!
For thou, Diana, lov'st thy gentle brother
Beyond what earth and heaven can offer thee;
And dost, with quiet yearning, ever turn
Thy virgin face to his eternal light.
Let not my only brother, found so late,
Rave in the darkness of insanity!
And is thy will, when thou didst here conceal me,
At length fulfill'd—wouldst thou to me through him,
To him through me, thy gracious aid extend—
Oh, free him from the fetters of this curse,
Lest vainly pass the precious hours of safety.

Pylades.—Dost thou not know us, and this sacred grove,
And this blest light, which shines not on the dead?
Dost thou not feel thy sister and thy friend,
Who hold thee living in their firm embrace?
Grasp us! we are not shadows. Mark my words!
Collect thyself—each moment now is precious,
And our return hangs on a slender thread,
Which, as it seems, some gracious fate doth spin.

Ores.—(To Iphigenia.) My sister, let me for the first time taste,
With open heart, pure joy within thine arms!
Ye gods, who charge the heavy clouds with dread,
And sternly gracious send the long-sought rain
With thunder and the rush of mighty winds,
A horrid deluge on the trembling earth;
Yet dissipate at length man's dread suspense,
Exchanging timid wonder's anxious gaze
For grateful looks and joyous songs of praise,
When in each sparkling drop which gems the leaves,
Apollo, thousand-fold, reflects his beam,

And Iris colors with a magic hand
The dusky texture of the parting clouds;
Oh, let me also in my sister's arms,
And on the bosom of my friend, enjoy
With grateful thanks the bliss ye now bestow.
My heart assures me that your curses cease.
The dread Eumenides at length retire,
The brazen gates of Tartarus I hear
Behind them closing with a thund'ring clang.
A quick'ning odor from the earth ascends,
Inviting me to chase, upon its plains,
The joys of life and deeds of high emprize.

Pyl.—Lose not the moments which are limited!
The favoring gale, which swells our parting sail,
Must to Olympus waft our perfect joy.
Quick counsel and resolve the time demands.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Iphigenia.

Iphigenia.—When the powers on high decree
For a feeble child of earth
Dire perplexity and woe,
And his spirit doom to pass
With tumult wild from joy to grief,
And back again from grief to joy,
In fearful alternation;
They in mercy then provide,
In the precincts of his home,
Or upon the distant shore,
That to him may never fail
Ready help in hours of need,
A tranquil, faithful friend.
Oh, bless, ye heavenly powers, our Pylades,
And every project that his mind may form!
In combat his the vigorous arm of youth,
And in the counsel his the eye of age.
His soul is tranquil; in his inner mind

He guards a sacred, undisturb'd repose,
And from its silent depths a rich supply
Of aid and counsel draws for the distress'd.
He tore me from my brother, upon whom,
With fond amaze, I gaz'd and gaz'd again;
I could not realize my happiness,
Nor loose him from my arms, and heeded not
The danger's near approach that threatens us.
To execute their project of escape,
They hasten to the sea, where in a bay
Their comrades in the vessel lie conceal'd
And wait a signal. Me they have supplied
With artful answers, should the monarch send
To urge the sacrifice. Alas! I see
I must consent to follow like a child.
I have not learn'd deception nor the art
To gain with crafty wiles my purposes.
Detested falsehood! it doth not relieve
The breast like words of truth: it comforts not,
But is a torment in the forger's heart,
And, like an arrow which a god directs,
Flies back and wounds the archer. Through my heart
One fear doth chase another; perhaps with rage,
Again on the unconsecrated shore,
The Furies' grisly band my brother seize.
Perchance they are surpris'd? Methinks I hear
The tread of armed men. A messenger
Is coming from the king, with hasty steps.
How throbs my heart, how troubl'd is my soul,
Now that I see the countenance of one,
Whom with a word untrue I must encounter!

Iphigenia, Arkas.

Arkas.—Priestess, with speed conclude the sacrifice!
Impatiently the king and people wait.

Iphigenia.—I had perform'd my duty and thy will,
Had not unforeseen impediment
The execution of my purpose thwarted.

Ark.—What is it that obstructs the king's commands?

Iph.—Chance, which from mortals will not brook control.

Ark.—Possess me with the reason, that with speed
I may inform the king, who hath decreed
The death of both.

Iph.— The gods have not decreed it.
The elder of these men doth bear the guilt
Of kindred murder; on his steps attend
The dread Eumenides. They seiz'd their prey
Within the inner fane, polluting thus
The holy sanctuary. I hasten now,
Together with my virgin-train, to bathe
Diana's image in the sea, and there
With solemn rites its purity restore.
Let none presume our silent march to follow!

Ark.—This hindrance to the monarch I'll announce:
Do not commence the rite till he permit.

Iph.—The priestess interferes alone in this.

Ark.—An incident so strange the king should know.

Iph.—Here, nor his counsel nor command avails.

Ark.—Oft are the great consulted out of form.

Iph.—Do not insist on what I must refuse.

Ark.—A needful and a just demand refuse not.

Iph.—I yield, if thou delay not.

Ark.— I with speed
Will bear these tidings to the camp, and soon
Acquaint thee, priestess, with the king's reply.
There is a message I would gladly bear him;
'Twould quickly banish all perplexity:
Thou didst not heed thy faithful friend's advice.

Iph.—I willingly have done whate'er I could.

Ark.—E'en now 'tis not too late to change thy mind.

Iph.—To do so is, alas! beyond our power.

Ark.—What thou wouldst shun, thou deem'st impossible.

Iph.—Thy wish doth make thee deem it possible.

Ark.—Wilt thou so calmly venture everything?

Iph.—My fate I have committed to the gods.

Ark.—The gods are wont to save by human means.

Iph.—By their appointment everything is done.

Ark.—Believe me, all doth now depend on thee.
The irritated temper of the king
Alone condemns these men to bitter death.
The soldiers from the cruel sacrifice
And bloody service long have been disused;
Nay, many, whom their adverse fortunes cast
In foreign regions, there themselves have felt
How godlike to the exil'd wanderer
The friendly countenance of man appears.
Do not deprive us of thy gentle aid!
With ease thou canst thy sacred task fulfill:
For nowhere doth benignity, which comes
In human form from heaven, so quickly gain
An empire o'er the heart, as where a race,
Gloomy and savage, full of life and power,
Without external guidance, and oppress'd
With vague forebodings, bear life's heavy load.

Iph.—Shake not my spirit, which thou canst not bend
According to thy will.

Ark.— While there is time,
Nor labor nor persuasion shall be spar'd.

Iph.—Thy labor but occasions pain to me;
Both are in vain; therefore, I pray, depart.

Ark.—I summon pain to aid me, 'tis a friend
Who counsels wisely.

Iph.— Though it shakes my soul,
It doth not banish thence my strong repugnance.

Ark.—Can then a gentle soul repugnance feel
For benefits bestow'd by one so noble?

Iph.—Yes, when the donor, for those benefits,
Instead of gratitude, demands myself.

Ark.—Who no affection feels doth never want
Excuses. To the king I'll now relate
All that has happen'd. Oh, that in thy soul
Thou wouldst revolve his noble conduct, priestess,
Since thy arrival to the present day!

SCENE III.

Iphigenia.

Iphigenia.—(Alone.) These words at an unseasonable hour
Produce a strong revulsion in my breast;
I am alarm'd!—For as the rushing tide
In rapid currents eddies o'er the rocks
Which lie among the sand upon the shore,
E'en so a stream of joy o'erwhelm'd my soul.
I grasp'd what had appear'd impossible.
It was as though another gentle cloud
Around me lay, to raise me from the earth,
And rock my spirit in the same sweet sleep
Which the kind goddess shed around my brow,
What time her circling arm from danger snatch'd me.
My brother forcibly engross'd my heart;
I listen'd only to his friend's advice;
My soul rush'd eagerly to rescue them,
And as the mariner with joy surveys
The lessening breakers of a desert isle,
So Tauris lay behind me. But the voice
Of faithful Arkas wakes me from my dream,
Reminding me that those whom I forsake
Are also men. Deceit doth now become
Doubly detested. O my soul, be still!
Beginn'st thou now to tremble and to doubt?
Thy lonely shelter on the firm-set earth
Must thou abandon? and, embark'd once more,
At random drift upon tumultuous waves,
A stranger to thyself and to the world?

SCENE IV.

Iphigenia, Pylades.

Pylades.—Where is she? that my words with speed may tell
The joyful tidings of our near escape!

Iphigenia.—Oppress'd with gloomy care, I much require
The certain comfort thou dost promise me.

Pyl.—Thy brother is restor'd! The rocky paths
Of this unconsecrated shore we trod
In friendly converse, while behind us lay,
Unmark'd by us, the consecrated grove;
And ever with increasing glory shone
The fire of youth around his noble brow.
Courage and hope his glowing eye inspir'd;
And his free heart exulted with the joy
Of saving thee, his sister, and his friend.

Iph.—The gods shower blessings on thee, Pylades!
And from those lips which breathe such welcome news,
Be the sad note of anguish never heard!

Pyl.—I bring yet more—for fortune, like a prince,
Comes not alone, but well accompanied.
Our friends and comrades we have also found.
Within a bay they had conceal'd the ship,
And mournful sat expectant. They beheld
Thy brother, and a joyous shout uprais'd,
Imploring him to haste the parting hour.
Each hand impatient long'd to grasp the oar,
While from the shore a gently murmuring breeze,
Perceiv'd by all, unfurl'd its wing auspicious.
Let us then hasten; guide me to the fane,
That I may tread the sanctuary, and seize
With sacred awe the object of our hopes.
I can unaided on my shoulder bear
Diana's image: how I long to feel
The precious burden!

(While speaking the last words, he approaches the temple, without perceiving that he is not followed by Iphigenia; at length he turns round.)

Why thus ling'ring stand?
Why art thou silent? wherefore thus confus'd?
Doth some new obstacle oppose our bliss?
Inform me, hast thou to the king announc'd
The prudent message we agreed upon?

Iph.—I have, dear Pylades; yet wilt thou chide.
Thy very aspect is a mute reproach.
The royal messenger arriv'd, and I,

According to thy counsel, fram'd my speech.
He seem'd surpris'd, and earnestly besought,
That to the monarch I should first announce
The rite unusual, and attend his will.
I now await the messenger's return.

Pyl.—Danger again doth hover o'er our heads!
O priestess, why neglect to shroud thyself
Within the veil of sacerdotal rites?

Iph.—I never have employed them as a veil.

Pyl.—Pure soul! thy scruples will destroy alike
Thyself and us. Why did I not foresee
Such an emergency, and tutor thee
This counsel also wisely to elude?

Iph.—Chide only me, for mine alone the blame;
Yet other answer could I not return
To him, who strongly and with reason urg'd
What my own heart acknowledg'd to be right.

Pyl.—The danger thickens; but let us be firm,
Nor with incautious haste betray ourselves;
Calmly await the messenger's return,
And then stand fast, whatever his reply:
For the appointment of such sacred rites
Doth to the priestess, not the king belong.
Should he demand the stranger to behold,
Who is by madness heavily oppress'd,
Evasively pretend, that in the fane,
Securely guarded, thou retain'st us both.
Thus you secure us time to fly with speed,
Bearing the sacred treasure from this race,
Unworthy its possession. Phœbus sends
Auspicious omens, and fulfills his word,
Ere we the first conditions have perform'd.
Free is Orestes, from the curse absolv'd!
Oh, with the freed one, to the rocky isle
Where dwells the god, waft us, propitious gales!
Thence to Mycene, that she may revive;
That from the ashes of the extinguish'd hearth,
The household gods may joyously arise,
And beauteous fire illumine their abode!

Thy hand from golden censers first shall strew
The fragrant incense. O'er that threshold thou
Shalt life and blessing once again dispense,
The curse atone, and all thy kindred grace
With the fresh bloom of renovated life.

Iph.—As doth the flower revolve to meet the sun,
Once more my spirit to sweet comfort turns,
Struck by thy words' invigorating ray.
How dear the counsel of a present friend,
Lacking whose godlike power, the lonely one
In silence droops! for, lock'd within his breast,
Slowly are ripen'd purpose and resolve,
Which friendship's genial warmth had soon matur'd.

Pyl.—Farewell! I haste to reassure our friends,
Who anxiously await us; then with speed
I will return, and, hid within the brake,
Attend thy signal.—Wherefore, all at once,
Doth anxious thought o'ercloud thy brow serene?

Iph.—Forgive me! As light clouds athwart the sun,
So cares and fears float darkling o'er my soul.

Pyl.—Oh, banish fear! With danger it hath form'd
A close alliance—they are constant friends.

Iph.—It is an honest scruple, which forbids
That I should cunningly deceive the king,
And plunder him who was my second sire.

Pyl.—Him thou dost fly, who would have slain thy brother.

Iph.—To me, at least, he hath been ever kind.

Pyl.—What fate commands is not ingratitude.

Iph.—Alas! it still remains ingratitude;
Necessity alone can justify it.

Pyl.—Thee, before gods and men it justifies.

Iph.—But my own heart is still unsatisfied.

Pyl.—Scruples too rigid are a cloak for pride.

Iph.—I cannot argue, I can only feel.

Pyl.—Conscious of right, thou shouldst respect thyself.

Iph.—Then only doth the heart know perfect ease,
When not a stain pollutes it.

Pyl.— In this fane
Pure hast thou kept thy heart. Life teaches us
To be less strict with others and ourselves;
Thou'lt learn the lesson too. So wonderful
Is human nature, and its varied ties
Are so involv'd and complicate, that none
May hope to keep his inmost spirit pure,
And walk without perplexity through life.
Nor are we call'd upon to judge ourselves;
With circumspection to pursue his path,
Is the immediate duty of a man.
For seldom can he rightly estimate,
Or his past conduct or his present deeds.

Iph.—Almost thou dost persuade me to consent.

Pyl.—Needs there persuasion when no choice is granted?
To save thyself, thy brother, and a friend,
One path presents itself, and canst thou ask
If we shall follow it?

Iph.— Still let me pause,
For such injustice thou couldst not thyself
Calmly return for benefits receiv'd.

Pyl.—If we should perish, bitter self-reproach,
Forerunner of despair, will be thy portion.
It seems thou art not used to suffer much,
When, to escape so great calamity,
Thou canst refuse to utter one false word.

Iph.—Oh, that I bore within a manly heart!
Which, when it hath conceiv'd a bold resolve,
'Gainst every other voice doth close itself.

Pyl.—In vain thou dost refuse; with iron hand
Necessity commands; her stern decree
Is law supreme, to which the gods themselves
Must yield submission. In dread silence rules
The uncounsell'd sister of eternal fate.
What she appoints thee to endure, endure;
What to perform, perform. The rest thou know'st.
Ere long I will return, and then receive
The seal of safety from thy sacred hand.

SCENE V.

Iphigenia.

Iphigenia.—(Alone.) I must obey him, for I see my friends
Beset with peril. Yet my own sad fate
Doth with increasing anguish move my heart.
May I no longer feed the silent hope
Which in my solitude I fondly cherish'd?
Shall the dire curse eternally endure?
And shall our fated race ne'er rise again
With blessings crown'd?—All mortal things decay!
The noblest powers, the purest joys of life
At length subside: then wherefore not the curse?
And have I vainly hop'd that, guarded here,
Secluded from the fortunes of my race,
I, with pure heart and hands, some future day
Might cleanse the deep defilement of our house?
Scarce was my brother in my circling arms
From raging madness suddenly restor'd,
Scarce had the ship, long pray'd for, near'd the strand,
Once more to waft me to my native shores,
When unrelenting fate, with iron hand,
A double crime enjoins; commanding me
To steal the image, sacred and rever'd,
Confided to my care, and him deceive
To whom I owe my life and destiny.
Let not abhorrence spring within my heart!
Nor the old Titan's hate, toward you, ye gods,
Infix its vulture talons in my breast!
Save me, and save your image in my soul!
An ancient song comes back upon mine ear—
I had forgotten it, and willingly—
The Parcæ's song, which horribly they sang,
What time, hurl'd headlong from his golden seat,
Fell Tantalus. They with their noble friend
Keen anguish suffer'd; savage was their breast
And horrible their song. In days gone by,
When we were children, oft our ancient nurse
Would sing it to us, and I mark'd it well.

O, fear the immortals,
Ye children of men!
Eternal dominion
They hold in their hands,
And o'er their wide empire
Wield absolute sway.

Whom they have exalted,
Let him fear them most!
Around golden tables,
On cliffs and clouds resting
The seats are prepar'd.

If contest ariseth,
The guests are hurl'd headlong,
Disgrac'd and dishonor'd,
And, fetter'd in darkness,
Await with vain longing,
A juster decree.

But in feasts everlasting,
Around the gold tables
Still dwell the immortals.
From mountain to mountain
They stride; while ascending
From fathomless chasms,
The breath of the Titans,
Half stifl'd with anguish,
Like volumes of incense
Fumes up to the skies.

From races ill-fated,
Their aspect joy-bringing,
Oft turn the celestials,
And shun in the children
To gaze on the features
Once lov'd and still speaking
Of their mighty sire.

Thus sternly the Fates sang;
Immur'd in his dungeon,

The banish'd one listens,
The song of the Parcæ,
His children's doom ponders,
And boweth his head.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Thoas, Arkas.

Arkas.—I own I am perplex'd, and scarcely know
'Gainst whom to point the shaft of my suspicion,
Whether the priestess aids the captives' flight,
Or they themselves clandestinely contrive it.
'Tis rumored that the ship which brought them here
Is lurking somewhere in a bay conceal'd.
This stranger's madness, these new lustral rites,
The specious pretext for delay, excite
Mistrust, and call aloud for vigilance.

Thoas.—Summon the priestess to attend me here!
Then go with speed, and strictly search the shore,
From yon projecting land to Dian's grove:
Forbear to violate its sacred depths;
A watchful ambush set, attack and seize,
According to your wont, whome'er you find.

(Arkas retires.)

SCENE II.

Thoas.

Thoas.—(Alone.) Fierce anger rages in my riven breast,
First against her, whom I esteem'd so pure;
Then 'gainst myself, whose foolish lenity
Hath fashion'd her for treason. Man is soon
Inur'd to slavery, and quickly learns
Submission, when of freedom quite depriv'd.
If she had fallen in the savage hands
Of my rude sires, and had their holy rage
Forborne to slay her, grateful for her life,
She would have recogniz'd her destiny,

Have shed before the shrine the stranger's blood,
And duty nam'd what was necessity.
Now my forbearance in her breast allures
Audacious wishes. Vainly I had hop'd
To bind her to me; rather she contrives
To shape an independent destiny.
She won my heart through flattery; and now
That I oppose her, seeks to gain her ends
By fraud and cunning, and my kindness deems
A worthless and prescriptive property.

SCENE III.

Iphigenia, Thoas.

Iphigenia.—Me hast thou summon'd? wherefore art thou here?

Thoas.—Wherefore delay the sacrifice? inform me.

Iph.—I have acquainted Arkas with the reasons.

Tho.—From thee I wish to hear them more at large.

Iph.—The goddess for reflection grants thee time.

Tho.—To thee this time seems also opportune.

Iph.—If to this cruel deed thy heart is steel'd,
Thou shouldst not come! A king who meditates
A deed inhuman, may find slaves enow,
Willing for hire to bear one-half the curse,
And leave the monarch's presence undefil'd.
Enwrapt in gloomy clouds he forges death,
Whose flaming arrow on his victim's head
His hirelings hurl; while he above the storm
Remains untroubl'd, an impassive god.

Tho.—A wild song, priestess, issued from thy lips.

Iph.—No priestess, king! but Agamemnon's daughter;
While yet unknown, thou didst respect my words:
A princess now—and think'st thou to command me?
From youth I have been tutor'd to obey,
My parents first, and then the deity;
And thus obeying, ever hath my soul
Known sweetest freedom. But nor then nor now

Have I been taught compliance with the voice
And savage mandates of a man.

Tho.— Not I,
An ancient law doth claim obedience from thee.

Iph.—Our passions eagerly catch hold of laws
Which they can wield as weapons. But to me
Another law, one far more ancient, speaks,
And doth command me to withstand thee, king!
That law declaring sacred every stranger.

Tho.—These men, methinks, lie very near thy heart,
When sympathy with them can lead thee thus
To violate discretion's primal law,
That those in power should never be provok'd.

Iph.—Speaking or silent, thou canst always know
What is, and ever must be, in my heart.
Doth not remembrance of a common doom,
To soft compassion melt the hardest heart?
How much more mine! in them I see myself.
I trembling kneel'd before the altar once,
And solemnly the shade of early death
Environ'd me. Aloft the knife was rais'd
To pierce my bosom, throbbing with warm life;
A dizzy horror overwhelm'd my soul;
My eyes grew dim—I found myself in safety.
Are we not bound to render the distress'd
The gracious kindness from the gods receiv'd?
Thou know'st we are, and yet wilt thou compel me?

Tho.—Obey thine office, priestess, not the king.

Iph.—Cease! nor thus seek to cloak the savage force
Which triumphs o'er a woman's feebleness.
Though woman, I am born as free as man.
Did Agamemnon's son before thee stand,
And thou requiredst what became him not,
His arm and trusty weapon would defend
His bosom's freedom. I have only words;
But it becomes a noble-minded man
To treat with due respect the words of woman.

Tho.—I more respect them than a brother's sword.

Iph.—Uncertain ever is the chance of arms,
No prudent warrior doth despise his foe;
Nor yet defenseless 'gainst severity
Hath nature left the weak; she gives him craft
And wily cunning; artful he delays,
Evades, eludes, and finally escapes.
Such arms are justified by violence.

Tho.—But circumspection countervails deceit.

Iph.—Which a pure spirit doth abhor to use.

Tho.—Do not incautiously condemn thyself.

Iph.—Oh, couldst thou see the struggle of my soul,
Courageously to ward the first attack
Of an unhappy doom, which threatens me!
Do I then stand before thee weaponless?
Prayer, lovely prayer, fair branch in woman's hand,
More potent far than instruments of war,
Thou dost thrust back. What now remains for me
Wherewith my inborn freedom to defend?
Must I implore a miracle from heaven?
Is there no power within my spirit's depths?

Tho.—Extravagant thy interest in the fate
Of these two strangers. Tell me who they are,
For whom thy heart is thus so deeply mov'd.

Iph.—They are—they seem at least—I think them Greeks.

Tho.—Thy countrymen; no doubt they have renew'd
The pleasing picture of return.

Iph.—(After a pause.) Doth man
Lay undisputed claim to noble deeds?
Doth he alone to his heroic breast
Clasp the impossible? What call we great?
What deeds, though oft narrated, still uplift
With shudd'ring horror the narrator's soul,
But those which, with improbable success,
The valiant have attempted? Shall the man
Who all alone steals on his foes by night,
And raging like an unexpected fire,
Destroys the slumbering host, and press'd at length
By rous'd opponents or his foemen's steeds,
Retreats with booty—be alone extoll'd?

Or he who, scorning safety, boldly roams
Through woods and dreary wilds, to scour the land
Of thieves and robbers? Is naught left for us?
Must gentle woman quite forego her nature,
Force against force employ—like Amazons,
Usurp the sword from man, and bloodily
Revenge oppression? In my heart I feel
The stirrings of a noble enterprise;
But if I fail—severe reproach, alas!
And bitter misery will be my doom.
Thus on my knees I supplicate the gods.
Oh, are ye truthful, as men say ye are,
Now prove it by your countenance and aid;
Honor the truth in me! Attend, O king!
A secret plot is laid; 'tis vain to ask
Touching the captives; they are gone, and seek
Their comrades who await them on the shore.
The eldest—he whom madness lately seiz'd,
And who is now recover'd—is Orestes,
My brother, and the other Pylades,
His early friend and faithful confidant.
From Delphi, Phœbus sent them to this shore
With a divine command to steal away
The image of Diana, and to him
Bear back the sister, promising for this
Redemption to the blood-stain'd matricide.
I have deliver'd now into thy hands
The remnants of the house of Tantalus.
Destroy us—if thou canst.

Tho.— And dost thou think
The savage Scythian will attend the voice
Of truth and of humanity, unheard
By the Greek Atreus?

Iph.— 'Tis heard by all,
Whate'er may be their clime, within whose breast
Flows pure and free the gushing stream of life.—
What silent purpose broods within thy soul?
Is it destruction? Let me perish first!
For now, deliv'rance hopeless, I perceive
The dreadful peril into which I have

With rash precipitancy plung'd my friends.
Alas! I soon shall see them bound before me!
How to my brother shall I say farewell?
I, the unhappy author of his death.
Ne'er can I gaze again in his dear eyes!

Tho.—The traitors have contriv'd a cunning web,
And cast it round thee, who, secluded long,
Giv'st willing credence to thine own desires.

Iph.—No, no! I'd pledge my life these men are true.
And shouldst thou find them otherwise, O king,
Then let them perish both, and cast me forth,
That on some rock-girt island's dreary shore
I may atone my folly. Are they true,
And is this man indeed my dear Orestes,
My brother, long implor'd—release us both,
And o'er us stretch the kind protecting arm,
Which long hath shelter'd me. My noble sire
Fell through his consort's guilt—she by her son;
On him alone the hope of Atreus' race
Doth now repose. Oh, with pure heart and hands
Let me depart to expiate our house.
Yes, thou wilt keep thy promise; thou didst swear,
That were a safe return provided me,
I should be free to go. The hour is come.
A king doth never grant like common men,
Merely to gain a respite from petition;
Nor promise what he hopes will ne'er be claim'd.
Then first he feels his dignity complete
When he can make the long-expecting happy.

Tho.—As fire opposes water, and doth seek
With hissing rage to overcome its foe,
So doth my anger strive against thy words.

Iph.—Let mercy, like the consecrated flame
Of silent sacrifice, encircl'd round
With songs of gratitude, and joy, and praise,
Above the tumult gently rise to heaven.

Tho.—How often hath this voice assuag'd my soul!

Iph.—Extend thy hand to me in sign of peace.

Tho.—Large thy demand within so short a time.

Iph.—Beneficence doth no reflection need.

Tho.—'Tis needed oft, for evil springs from good.

Iph.—'Tis doubt which good doth oft to evil turn.
Consider not: act as thy feelings prompt thee.

SCENE IV.

Orestes (armed), Iphigenia, Thoas.

Orestes.—(Addressing his followers.) Redouble your exertions! hold them back!
Few moments will suffice; retain your ground,
And keep a passage open to the ship
For me and for my sister.
(To Iphigenia, without perceiving Thoas.)
Come with speed!
We are betray'd—brief time remains for flight.

Thoas.—None in my presence with impunity
His naked weapon wears.

Iphigenia.— Do not profane
Diana's sanctuary with rage and blood.
Command your people to forbear awhile,
And listen to the priestess, to the sister.

Ores.—Say, who is he that threatens us?

Iph.— In him
Revere the king, who was my second father.
Forgive me, brother, that my childlike heart
Hath plac'd our fate thus wholly in his hands.
I have betray'd your meditated flight,
And thus from treachery redeem'd my soul.

Ores.—Will he permit our peaceable return?

Iph.—Thy gleaming sword forbids me to reply.

Ores.—(Sheathing his sword.) Then speak! thou seest I listen to thy words.

SCENE V.

Orestes, Iphigenia, Thoas. Enter Pylades, soon after him Arkas, both with drawn swords.

Pylades.—Do not delay! our friends are putting forth
Their final strength, and yielding step by step,
Are slowly driven backward to the sea.—
A conference of princes find I here?
Is this the sacred person of the king?

Arkas.—Calmly, as doth become thee, thou dost stand,
O king, surrounded by thine enemies.
Soon their temerity shall be chastis'd;
Their yielding followers fly—their ship is ours.
Speak but the word, and it is wrapt in flames.

Thoas.—Go, and command my people to forbear!
Let none annoy the foe while we confer.

(Arkas retires.)

Orestes.—I willingly consent. Go, Pylades!
Collect the remnant of our friends, and wait
The appointed issue of our enterprise.

(Pylades retires.)

SCENE VI.

Iphigenia, Thoas, Orestes.

Iphigenia.—Relieve my cares ere ye begin to speak.
I fear contention, if thou wilt not hear
The voice of equity, O king—if thou
Wilt not, my brother, curb thy headstrong youth.

Thoas.—I, as becomes the elder, check my rage.
Now answer me: how dost thou prove thyself
The priestess' brother, Agamemnon's son?

Orestes.—Behold the sword with which the hero slew
The valiant Trojans. From his murderer
I took the weapon, and implor'd the gods
To grant me Agamemnon's mighty arm,
Success and valor, with a death more noble.

Select one of the leaders of thy host,
And place the best as my opponent here.
Where'er on earth the sons of heroes dwell,
This boon is to the stranger ne'er refus'd.

Tho.—This privilege hath ancient custom here
To strangers ne'er accorded.

Ores.— Then from us
Commence the novel custom! A whole race
In imitation soon will consecrate
Its monarch's noble action into law.
Nor let me only for our liberty—
Let me, a stranger, for all strangers fight.
If I should fall, my doom be also theirs;
But if kind fortune crown me with success,
Let none e'er tread this shore, and fail to meet
The beaming eye of sympathy and love,
Or unconsol'd depart!

Tho.— Thou dost not seem
Unworthy of thy boasted ancestry.
Great is the number of the valiant men
Who wait upon me; but I will myself,
Although advanc'd in years, oppose the foe,
And am prepar'd to try the chance of arms.

Iph.—No, no! such bloody proofs are not requir'd.
Unhand thy weapon, king! my lot consider;
Rash combat oft immortalizes man;
If he should fall, he is renown'd in song;
But after ages reckon not the tears
Which ceaseless the forsaken woman sheds;
And poets tell not of the thousand nights
Consum'd in weeping, and the dreary days,
Wherein her anguish'd soul, a prey to grief,
Doth vainly yearn to call her lov'd one back.
Fear warn'd me to beware lest robber's wiles
Might lure me from this sanctuary, and then
Betray me into bondage. Anxiously
I question'd them, each circumstance explor'd,
Demanded signs, and now my heart's assur'd.
See here, the mark as of three stars impress'd

On his right hand, which on his natal day
Were by the priest declar'd to indicate
Some dreadful deed by him to be perform'd.
And then this scar, which doth his eyebrow cleave,
Redoubles my conviction. When a child,
Electra, rash and inconsiderate,
Such was her nature, loos'd him from her arms.
He fell against a tripos. Oh, 'tis he!—
Shall I adduce the likeness to his sire,
Or the deep rapture of my inmost heart,
In further token of assurance, king?

Tho.—E'en though thy words had banish'd every doubt,
And I had curb'd the anger in my breast,
Still must our arms decide. I see no peace.
Their purpose, as thou didst thyself confess,
Was to deprive me of Diana's image.
And think ye that I look contented on?
The Greeks are wont to cast a longing eye
Upon the treasures of barbarians,
A golden fleece, good steeds, or daughters fair;
But force and guile not always have avail'd
To lead them, with their booty, safely home.

Ores.—The image shall not be a cause of strife!
We now perceive the error which the god,
Our journey here commanding, like a veil,
Threw o'er our minds. His counsel I implor'd,
To free me from the Furies' grisly band.
He answer'd, "Back to Greece the sister bring,
Who in the sanctuary on Tauris' shore
Unwillingly abides; so ends the curse!"
To Phœbus' sister we applied the words,
And he referred to thee! The bonds severe,
Which held thee from us, holy one, are rent,
And thou art ours once more. At thy blest touch,
I felt myself restor'd. Within thine arms,
Madness once more around me coil'd its folds,
Crushing the marrow in my frame, and then
Forever, like a serpent, fled to hell.
Through thee, the daylight gladdens me anew.
The counsel of the goddess now shines forth

In all its beauty and beneficence.
Like to a sacred image, unto which
An oracle immutably hath bound
A city's welfare, thee Diana took,
Protectress of our house, and guarded here
Within this holy stillness, to become
A blessing to thy brother and thy race.
Now when each passage to escape seems clos'd,
And safety hopeless, thou dost give us all.
O king, incline thine heart to thoughts of peace!
Let her fulfill her mission, and complete
The consecration of our father's house,
Me to their purified abode restore,
And place upon my brow the ancient crown!
Requite the blessing which her presence brought thee,
And let me now my nearer right enjoy!
Cunning and force, the proudest boast of man,
Fade in the lustre of her perfect truth;
Nor unrequited will a noble mind
Leave confidence, so childlike and so pure.

Iph.—Think on thy promise; let thy heart be mov'd
By what a true and honest tongue hath spoken!
Look on us, king! an opportunity
For such a noble deed not oft occurs.
Refuse thou canst not—give thy quick consent.

Tho.—Then go!

Iph.— Not so, my king! I cannot part
Without thy blessing, or in anger from thee.
Banish us not! the sacred right of guests
Still let us claim: so not eternally
Shall we be sever'd. Honor'd and belov'd
As mine own father was, art thou by me:
And this impression in my soul remains.
Should e'en the meanest peasant of thy land
Bring to my ear the tones I heard from thee,
Or should I on the humblest see thy garb,
I will with joy receive him as a god,
Prepare his couch myself, beside our hearth
Invite him to a seat, and only ask
Touching thy fate and thee. Oh, may the gods

To thee the merited reward impart
Of all thy kindness and benignity!
Farewell! Oh, do not turn away, but give
One kindly word of parting in return!
So shall the wind more gently swell our sails,
And from our eyes with soften'd anguish flow
The tears of separation. Fare thee well!
And graciously extend to me thy hand,
In pledge of ancient friendship.

Tho.—(Extending his hand.) Fare thee well.

The *Iphigenia in Tauris* has been termed by Schlegel "an echo of Greek song," an epithet that is perfectly appropriate, and as elegant as it is appropriate; for without any servile imitation of Euripides, this beautiful and interesting drama reproduces, in its finished verses and its softened characters, the graceful and colossal figures of the antique. Says the translator, as to the heroine: "While contemplating her, we feel as if some exquisite statue of Grecian art had become animated by a living soul, and moved and breathed before us. Though exhibiting the severe simplicity which characterizes the creations of antiquity, she is far removed from all coldness and austerity; and her character, though cast in a classic mold, is free from the harsh and vindictive spirit which darkens the heroism of an age when religion lent her sanction to hatred and revenge."

Worthy of note is the subtlety with which Iphigenia imposes on the credulity of Thoas, the barbarian monarch, though Goethe describes him as a barbarian only in the sense in which the Greeks applied the word

to all who were not Greeks. She persuades him not only to sanction her project, but to assist in her design, and the ingenuity displayed by the priestess of Diana in escaping with her brother, together with her powerful appeal to the better nature of the king, forms perhaps the most interesting feature in the play. Some offense, indeed, is given by Iphigenia's unscrupulous violation of the truth, and the more so that we recognize in the crafty priestess the innocent victim who so strongly awakened our sympathies in the noble drama of *Iphigenia in Aulis*.

OBSTINACY

(EIGENSINN)

OF

R. BENEDIX.

(Translated by W. H. H. Chambers.)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

AUSDORF.

KATHARINA, his Wife.

ALFRED.

EMMA, his Wife.

HENRY,
LIZZIE } *Alfred's Servants.*

Obstinacy.

ARGUMENT.

Henry, one of Alfred's servants, is engaged to Lizzie, another servant. One morning when they have just finished laying the covers for breakfast, Henry, delighted that the task is finished, exclaims: "Thank God, the table is set," and asks Lizzie to say it likewise. On the ground that the request is silly, she refuses to say the words, and upon Henry's insistence they begin to quarrel. Alfred overhears the dispute and a little later relates the circumstance to Emma, his bride of three months, remarking that such a quarrel would be impossible between them, since she would undoubtedly grant any request of his, no matter how silly it might be. As Emma seems to question this statement, he finally asks her to repeat the words, and upon her refusal they, too, fall into a quarrel. About this time her father, Ausdorf and his wife, arrive. Alfred explains the incident to them, whereupon Ausdorf advises Alfred to be indulgent and assures him that the bride, like her mother, will be broken in after awhile and fulfill his every wish. The mother objects to this, and to prove it true Ausdorf asks his wife to repeat the phrase,

and, as she also refuses, they in turn lapse into a quarrel. Finally, however, a method of reconciliation is found; all three women repeat: "Thank God, the table is set," and peace is restored.

SCENE I.

Henry and Lizzie.

Lizzie.—(Behind the scenes.) Henry, Henry, open the door.

Henry.—Come, I'll help you.

(Lizzie enters; he kisses her.)

Liz.—Oh, Henry! suppose someone should see us.

Hen.—Who the mischief could see us?

Liz.—Why, our master may come in at any moment.

Hen.—Ah! Lizzie, a kiss taken in passing; caught, as it were, on the fly, always tastes sweetest.

Liz.—But suppose our master——

Hen.—Well, suppose he had really seen it; what's the difference?

Liz.—I'd die of shame.

Hen.—Why so? He kisses his wife, doesn't he; his bride of three months——?

Liz.—Of course, his wife. If you were my husband——

Hen.—Well, how long will it be before——?

Liz.—Who can tell——?

Hen.—Longer at all events than suits you.

Liz.—What a speech that is! We'd better attend to setting the table.

SCENE II.

Henry, Lizzie and Alfred (who remains unnoticed in the doorway).

Lizzie.—The father-in-law and his wife are coming to breakfast.

Henry.—And how perfectly delighted they are over the young folks' happiness.—Hem, a father-in-law is something I cannot, in truth, furnish you.

Liz.—Oh, never mind; neither can I.

Hen.—To my mind we two are quite sufficient in ourselves. Thank goodness the table is set!

Liz.—Yes.

Hen.—What's that?

Liz.—Nothing; I merely said yes.

Hen.—That won't do; you must say it, too.

Liz.—What?

Hen.—Thank goodness, the table is set!

Liz.—For what reason?

Hen.—Because it's the proper thing to do.

Liz.—Nonsense!

Hen.—When we've finished something, 'tis then proper to say: Thank goodness, or praise be to God, or thank God the thing is done.

Liz.—What folly!

Hen.—'Tis neither folly nor nonsense. When God had finished creating the world and had seen that all was good, then He, too, said: Thank God the world is done! And for this reason 'tis a pious custom to say when we've——

Liz.—Pshaw! get out with your tomfoolery.

Hen.—Lizzie, it isn't tomfoolery. You mustn't be such an infidel. Come here and say as I did: Thank God the table is set!

Liz.—No.

Hen.—As a favor to me?

Liz.—I will not.

Hen.—You will not?

Liz.—No.

Hen.—When I beg you to do something you say you will not?

Liz.—Yes, that's just what I say; and, when I say I won't, I won't, either. Not if you beg me ten times.

Hen.—What's that? I may beg ten times and you'll always answer no!

Liz.—Yes, whenever you propose such silly things.

Hen.—It's not silly at all; but that isn't the question, anyway; you should say it if for no other reason than the fact that I ask you.

Liz.—I won't do it.

Hen.—Lizzie!

Liz.—Henry!

Hen.—Now you must say it.

Liz.—I must?

Hen.—Yes; I insist.

Liz.—You're surely dreaming; or, did you get out of bed this morning left foot first?

Hen.—Don't try to make a joke of this matter; I'm in dead earnest. You shall say: Thank God the table is set.

Liz.—I shall say that?

Hen.—Yes.

Liz.—I shall? I must?

Hen.—You must and shall.

Liz.—Well, now, I positively will not.

Hen.—Lizzie, I entreat you.

Liz.—I won't do it.

Hen.—For the last time I beg——

Liz.—I won't do it, I tell you, I won't; not even if you stand on your head to beg.

Hen.—We'll see about that.

Liz.—Yes, we will see.

Hen.—Then you won't grant my request? You refuse obstinately?

Liz.—Yes.

Hen.—And you won't change your mind or be less stubborn?

Liz.—No.

Hen.—But you shall. (He takes hold of her arm.)

Liz.—Ouch!

Hen.—Say it.

Liz.—No; ouch! ouch!

Hen.—Thank God the table is set.

Liz.—No, no. You hateful man, to pinch me so!—and I won't say it, either.

Hen.—Very well; then it's all over between us.

(Releases her arm.)

Liz.—Well, go.

Hen.—You give me up so easily?

Liz.—If you will be a fool.

Hen.—But you might so easily say the little phrase.

Liz.—But I won't—I won't—I won't.

Hen.—Well, then, go to the——

Liz.—We'll speak about it some other time.

Hen.—Lizzie: Thank God the table is set.

Liz.—No.

Hen.—Obstinacy, thy name is woman.—Entreaty, threats, force, all in vain. I really believe I might kill you and yet you wouldn't say it.

Alfred.—Well, let her live for the present, at least, Henry, whether she says it or no.

Hen.—Ah! master, you heard——?

Alf.—A portion of your quarrel—yes, the girl is certainly very stubborn.

Hen.—Oh, but she's so good otherwise—I don't know what's got into her head to-day.

Alf.—Well, as a matter of fact, who can ever tell what a woman has got in her head. Be that as it may, now go and get a bottle of Madeira; my father-in-law is very fond of a glass or two at breakfast.

Hen.—Well, she must say it; nevertheless.

(Henry and Lizzie leave.)

Alf.—(Alone.) I wonder if she hasn't finished dressing yet—still, she rang sometime ago. Ah! here she is.

SCENE III.

Alfred and Emma.

Emma.—Good morning, dear.

Alfred.—Good morning, my darling Emma.

Emma.—How did you sleep?

Alf.—Splendidly; the happy always sleep well.

Emma.—And you are happy?

Alf.—Can you ask such a question? Are you not my wife?

Emma.—Oh, you flatter! Really, it must stop. We've been married now quite three months, and it's time you began to act like a real husband and stop playing the lover.

Alf.—And should you like that?

Emma.—Well, you know everybody tells me that men, once married, change, and I must get used to it, I suppose. And then, too, you know the longer you put off the alteration, the longer you pamper and spoil me, the more difficult I shall find it to become used to the altered conditions.

Alf.—I shall never alter in the least, my dear wife; you shall never be able to detect any difference between the man that is and the man that was.

Emma.—Nor shall I ever give you any opportunity to change, either.

Alf.—I know that you are the best wife on the face of the globe. Why, you fulfill all my requests before I even have time to give them expression.

Emma.—And don't you do exactly the same thing?

Alf.—How can I resist your eyes when they beam so lovingly upon me and—crave a kiss?

Emma.—Gently, my dear; my eyes never crave kisses; at the very most they merely permit them.

Alf.—Well, permit then——

Emma.—Darling Alfred!

Alf.—My sweet little wife!

Emma.—My parents are a long time coming; I thought they'd be here long before now.

Alf.—Do you miss them?

Emma.—I hope that question wasn't asked deliberately.

Alf.—No, no; it simply slipped out—(Laughing.) That reminds me that I just——

Emma.—Just what? It must have been something very funny.

Alf.—Listened to a highly comic scene.

Emma.—Listened? For shame, husband!

Alf.—Oh, quite accidentally. As I was coming out of my room a little while ago my attention was drawn to some loud and lively talk. I stood still. Henry and Lizzie had just finished laying the covers for breakfast when Henry, perfectly well content, said: Thank God the table is set, and asked Lizzie to say it also, on the ground that everyone must do so when a task is complete.

Emma.—What a notion!

Alf.—Lizzie refused, Henry insisted, and they both fell into a regular quarrel. Henry attempted to compel her, but she remained obstinate and would not say it.

Emma.—Really, I'm sure one might well ask, which in this case was most obstinate, Henry or Lizzie?

Alf.—But he begged her to say it.

Emma.—It was a silly request.

Alf.—But such a trifling one as not to justify, in the least, her stubborn refusal.

Emma.—Just as little, his stubborn insistence. I don't think Lizzie was wrong.

Alf.—Well, don's let us quarrel about it. Such a thing couldn't happen to us, anyway.

Emma.—(Looks at him somewhat doubtfully.)

Alf.—Should I ask you to do anything of the sort, you'd do it.

Emma.—Ahem, ahem!

Alf.—I'm convinced that you'd do it.

Emma.—But what if I wouldn't?

Alf.—What if you wouldn't? The situation isn't conceivable; I'll bet on that.

Emma.—Don't bet.

Alf.—Let's try it, anyway.

Emma.—No, no!

Alf.—I entreat you, dear Emma, say just once: Thank God the table is set.

Emma.—Go along with you; don't be childish.

Alf.—Please say it.

Emma.—What a request!

Alf.—Please, sweet little wife, say just once: Thank God the table is set.

Emma.—No, I won't say it.

Alf.—Please, please.

Emma.—No, no.

Alf.—You won't say it?

Emma.—No.

Alf.—And you can refuse me a request?

Emma.—But it would be so childish to say it.

Alf.—It makes no difference whether it be childish or not. 'Tis simply a question of granting my request.

Emma.—But you do wrong to ask such a thing.

Alf.—That may be, but you do wrong to refuse.

Emma.—I do wrong? This is the first time you ever said anything like that to me.

Alf.—It is also the first time you ever refused to grant my requests.

Emma.—And the first time you ever made such a childish and inconsiderate request.

Alf.—Childish? inconsiderate? Such words to come from your lips? Is that the language of love?

Emma.—Can love demand such a piece of folly?

Alf.—Oh, I didn't demand; I only requested.

Emma.—Indeed—and if you should demand?

Alf.—Then——

Emma.—And if you should demand?

Alf.—Then assuredly you would not refuse.

Emma.—And that is just the very time I should refuse.

Alf.—What?

Emma.—You would demand such a thing of me? You would humiliate me? The request I might, perhaps, have granted; the demand I certainly shall not.

Alf.—Heavens! how boisterous and decided you are toward me! Is this the proper tone for a wife to use with her husband?

Emma.—And is such a piece of folly the proper thing for a husband to require of his wife?

SCENE IV.

Alfred, Emma, Lizzie and Henry.

Emma.—I forgot my handkerchief.

(Henry and Lizzie leave.)

Alfred.—Emma, don't drive a trifle, begun in mere jest, to extremes.

Emma.—Am I doing that? You're the one who is changing a jest into something serious.

Alf.—Have you reconsidered the matter? Will you give in—show yourself less obstinate?

Emma.—What! obstinate? Now you know I can't bear that word. I'm not obstinate in this case, not the least little bit, but you are since you so stubbornly insist upon such a piece of folly.

Alf.—But Emma, can't you understand that I don't care anything at all about this piece of folly, as you term it, but only that you should not refuse me any request.

Emma.—Well, my request is to drop the subject.

Alf.—But as I asked you first, my request should be first considered. I shouldn't have believed it possible that you could say no to me. I can't tolerate the thought.

Emma.—Indeed, I must never say no? Always only yes, yes, yes. See, you're just like all the men. You don't want any loving companion or equal; you want your wife to be a slave.

Alf.—What exaggeration!

Emma.—No exaggeration whatever; the enslaving process thus begins with a demand for blind obedience. But I will never allow myself to be made a slave; never, at any time. I'll defend my rights 'till I've drawn my last breath. I'll never submit, neither to threats nor to abuse.

Alf.—And Holy Writ says: Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, for the husband is head of the wife.

Emma.—See; I told you I was right. You would be the lord and master, I should be the slave; you would command, I should obey. Oh, I acknowledge your lordship, as is proper, and will obey all your sensible commands; but your foolish ones—never.

Alf.—These are not expressions that would be used to anyone for whom a person had the slightest esteem.

Emma.—Nor would such things be exacted of a wife for whom a person had the slightest esteem.

Alf.—But in jest——

Emma.—Oh, you've made downright earnest of it. Only a quarter of an hour ago you told me: I shall never alter in the least, my dear wife, and already you have become the cold, unfeeling husband, who sees in his wife only a serf.

Alf.—Well, I hope you're not going to cry; you know tears irritate me.

Emma.—How can I help it if your violence forces them from me.

Alf.—Heavens! what a monster I've become! My violence forces my wife to tears! Poor, pitiable wife whom ill-luck fetters to such a man!

Emma.—That's right, now add sarcasm to your cruelty. If anyone had told me that an hour ago, I couldn't have believed it. I got up so joyfully; I felt so happy, and now——

Alf.—You're the most miserable wife on the face of the globe! Don't hesitate, say so frankly.

Emma.—(Cries and makes no answer.)

Alf.—Well, by Jove! if she isn't absolutely crying! What would her parents think if they should come now?—Emma—Emma—my dear—let's make up.

Emma.—Make up?

Alf.—It's pure folly for us to spoil such a beautiful morning this way.

Emma.—You perceive that?

Alf.—No one ever had less grounds to be at variance than we.

Emma.—And yet you were so harsh to me.

Alf.—Well, I'll meet you more than half way. Here's my hand; let's make up.

Emma.—You naughty man to torture me so!

Alf.—And now, as a favor, say the little phrase for me.

Emma.—What, still?

Alf.—Won't you?

Emma.—But, Alfred——

Alf.—Now I met you more than half way, offered you my hand, and now it's your turn to give in.

Emma.—Then you insist upon it? You want to start our dispute over again, from the very beginning?

Alf.—Well, end the dispute—say the few words and I'll be entirely satisfied.

Emma.—No, and once again, no.

Alf.—No?

Emma.—No.

Alf.—That's fine, very fine! You see that you can afford me pleasure by this trifle and yet you refuse it. My request may be a piece of folly, but, nevertheless, it is my request—which you do not grant. It may be obstinacy in me to require this of you, but love should accommodate itself to and submit to obstinacy by giving in—yet you fail to do it. I don't care a snap for the foolish words, except as an evidence of your love, but this evidence I value highly—this also you refuse to give. I have entreated, demanded, exhausted all the

methods of making you listen to reason—yet you remain stubborn. And you pretend to love me? You, who cannot even once master your obstinacy sufficiently to do me a trifling favor! Pshaw, never tell me again that you love me!

Emma.—You reproach me with obstinacy? And with what right? You admit yourself that it is a piece of folly to require these silly words of me, and yet you insist upon this folly? It would degrade me, were I knowingly to consent to an irrational act, and yet you resolutely insist upon this degradation? Is that love? You plainly see that your demand pains me, but that doesn't move your feelings in the least. You yet insist on having your way. Your harshness compels my tears—they even fail to touch you. My whole being is aroused to resistance by your foolish demand, but you still stubbornly insist upon having your way. Well, now, who is the really obstinate one? Who really lacks love?

SCENE V.

Alfred, Emma and Henry.

Henry.—The lady and gentleman are coming.

Alfred.—Hide your tears. What would they think of you?

Emma.—For aught I care, they may know everything that has happened; I'm not to blame.

Alf.—Pay attention to your duties as mistress of a household who must always show a pleasant face to her guests.

SCENE VI.

Alfred, Emma, Ausdorf, Katharina, Henry and Lizzie.

Ausdorf.—Good morning, children, good morning. Well, how are you?

Alfred.—Welcome, welcome!

Emma.—Welcome, dearest father and mother!

Katharina.—Ah! my dear child, I haven't seen you for ever so long; you give us but little of your company, these days.

Emma.—Dearest mother——

Kath.—Oh, you needn't explain, my dear; I understand that a young wife has more to do than think about her mother.

Aus.—That's the way the world wags, wife. She shall leave her father and mother, so it reads in Holy Writ—but Emma, nevertheless, thinks about us sometimes, don't you, my dear?

Emma.—Always, father, always.

Alf.—Hadn't we better sit down?

(Henry and Lizzie leave.)

Aus.—I'm quite willing, my son; it's rather a good stretch to your house, and I arrive with tired legs and a hearty appetite. Ha! ha! wife, I see you've seated yourself between these young people; that's a clever idea of yours, for should they sit beside each other, they'd be of no earthly account to their guests. Now, let's clink glasses, you young people, to many days like this! What, you don't touch glasses? Why, my son, you look embarrassed and the young wife has a tear in her eye. Has there been a matrimonial scene?

Kath.—How can you ask such a rude question? Let the young people settle their own affairs.

Alf.—Merely a trifle, a jest—not worth mentioning. My dear Emma is rather too sensitive.

Emma.—That, too? Now I'm to be reproached with sensitiveness, besides!

Alf.—You might at least, in the presence of our guests——

Kath.—Calm yourself, Emma; such things do happen.

Emma.—I feel I am doing wrong not to control myself—I have tried to; have wrestled with my feelings, but I'm too deeply injured.

Kath.—Why, son-in-law——

Aus.—Hush, wife, don't meddle with the children's affairs.

Alf.—Judging from Emma's expressions, it might appear that I had done her some unheard of injury. You shall decide for yourselves. I'll tell you the whole circumstance.

Aus.—Don't do it, my son; we don't want to get mixed up in your family disputes.

Alf.—No, no; it's exactly with you that I must justify myself.

Aus.—It isn't necessary.

Alf.—You might believe——

Aus.—We believe nothing.

Kath.—(To her husband.) Leave him alone; perhaps it may lead to an understanding. Speak freely, my son.

Alf.—This morning I heard Henry ask Lizzie to say: Thank God the table is set, and because she refused they fell into a hot dispute. Laughing, I related the circumstance to my wife and flatteringly remarked that she would not be so obstinate; then, purely in jest I begged her to say the words. She refused, however, with such resolute obstinacy, such extraordinary stubbornness, that we finally fell into downright dispute.

Emma.—There, you hear it yourselves: obstinacy, stubbornness, sensitiveness, he reproaches me with all. You can certify that I was never the least bit obstinate.

Aus.—Well, now, my dear——

Kath.—Now, husband, don't do Emma an injustice; she never was obstinate. Calm yourself, my dear, we are not going to come between you; you'll soon be reconciled to each other.

Emma.—Alas! he still insists that I should say the words.

Kath.—What, my son, you still insist upon it?

Alf.—Please let's leave the thing undecided.

Aus.—Yes, that's what I say; please don't spoil my breakfast. You're a little simpleton, Emma, and you, my son, must be indulgent and take no notice of a little obstinacy; she'll get broken in after awhile, like my good wife here. Why, she don't know what opposition is; she grants all my requests, and if I should ask her to say: Thank God the table is set, she'd do it immediately.

Kath.—No I shouldn't.

Aus.—What?

Kath.—You wouldn't ask.

Aus.—But if I should?

Kath.—Then I shouldn't do it.

Aus.—Ah! wife, you're not in earnest?

Kath.—Decidedly so.

Aus.—You would refuse to grant my request?

Kath.—Yes.

Alf.—Pray, let's change the subject.

Aus.—No, this is something that never happened to me before; I must have it settled. Dear Katharina, say just once: Thank God the table is set.

Kath.—Let me alone.

Aus.—Please say it——

Kath.—No.

Aus.—When I see the table ready, it's an almost daily occurrence with me to say, with a grateful heart: Thank God the table is set. Now you say it once, also.

Kath.—No.

Emma.—Mother dear!

Aus.—Katharina!

Kath.—No.

Aus.—Katrina!

Kath.—No, no.

Aus.—Kitty!

Kath.—I won't do it.

Aus.—This has gone beyond a joke with me. Will you set your daughter such a bad example by your obstinacy?

Alf.—But I beg——

Kath.—There we have the old experience: Men all pull together when the enslaving of women is the object. The father takes sides against his own daughter.

Aus.—I side with no one but myself. What has happened between my daughter and her husband is none of my business. My present business is with you, since I have asked you to say these words.

Kath.—How can you ask your wife to say such folly?

Aus.—Folly or not, that isn't the question. This request is the touchstone of obedience, nothing else. Just as the celebrated hat set up by Geszler for the Swiss to salute was merely a touchstone of obedience.

Kath.—Quite right; and because that hat-command was likewise ridiculous, foolish and humiliating, the Swiss rebelled against their tyrant.

Emma.—And we don't submit any more than the Swiss.

Kath.—And we can rise in insurrection against our husbands.

Emma.—We are wives, but not slaves.

Kath.—In Turkey the wives may be slaves, but we live in a Christian land.

Emma.—Our husbands evidently desire to introduce the Turkish customs here, since their behavior is quite Turkish.

Kath.—But thank God we are not slaves; and that we know how to defend our rights.

Emma.—Blind obedience is a slavish virtue.

Kath.—We first inquire whether the command be just, before we obey.

Emma.—And such foolish commands we never obey, never, never.

Kath.—Never, never, never.

Aus.—(To Alfred.) We've got into a pretty scrape with the whole female sex pouring broadsides into us.

Alf.—(To Ausdorf.) What shall we do?

Aus.—(To Alfred.) You can do whatever you like; this thing threatens to spoil my breakfast, and if I don't breakfast in peace I can't enjoy my dinner.

Alf.—(To Ausdorf.) But we can't give in, can we?

Aus.—(To Alfred.) My dear fellow, this is a dispute in which no man can gain anything; I permitted myself to be dragged into it and became somewhat vexed, but my good temper is returning. Our wives are not so very far wrong since after all there is just as much obstinacy in stubborn insistence as in stubborn resistance.

Emma.—(To Katharina.) Had I dreamed that the thing would have gone as far as this I should have accepted it from the very beginning as a joke and let him have his way—but now I can't.

Kath.—(To Emma.) Oh, on no account; you would become the subject of his tyranny for ever.

Emma.—(To Katharina.) He shall see that I have a resolute will.

Kath.—(To Emma.) That's right; we won't weaken a particle, my husband shall marvel at the results; he'll plead a long time before I'll be good to him again.

Emma.—(To Katharina.) You'll stand by me, dearest mother?

Kath.—(To Emma.) Depend upon it.

Aus.—(To Alfred.) The cleverest always gives in——

Alf.—(To Ausdorf.) I would gladly; but honor——

Aus.—(To Alfred.) Bah! that's what men call it. To yield is painful, so they willingly give it a high-sounding name—honor. Let's treat it all as a joke and make up.

Alf.—(To Ausdorf.) Yes, that's it, a joke—I want to end the matter.

Aus.—Listen, my dears, your confederation is too powerful for me. I want to first strengthen myself with a good breakfast for a continuation of the battle. Thank God the table is set, one has only to help one's self.

Emma.—Mother dear, ought we not also——?

Kath.—Yes, yes; don't let us deprive ourselves of breakfast on account of this folly.

Alf.—My dear little wife, we want to put an end to this war and conclude a treaty of peace. I acknowledge that I was the prime mover in our dispute. In expiation of my fault, I present you with one of these two shawls.

Emma.—Alfred, I don't know——

Alf.—Choose.

Emma.—At this moment——

Alf.—Choose, my dear, choose. The one on the right? Well, that is very becoming. I have now met you three-quarters way——?

Emma.—Thank God the table is set.

Aus.—Good! my children, you did that well.

Alf.—Peace is declared.

Emma.—For ever.

Alf.—Nothing of that sort shall ever happen again.

Emma.—Never.

Aus.—That's right; let's clink on that.

Kath.—Husband.

Aus.—Ahem?

Kath.—Just look!

Aus.—Well?

Kath.—There's another shawl yet.

Aus.—Indeed?

Kath.—Don't you want to do a little expiating too?

Aus.—With the shawl? That's too expensive for me.

Kath.—But think——

Aus.—I hope you'll do it cheaper, my better-half. Such a young husband cannot endure the dissatisfaction of his wife, and so he is willing to make considerable sacrifice in expiation—however, once, as old as I am, he'll do it no longer, either.

Kath.—Fie, how horrible!

Emma.—Alfred, I hope that will not be——

Enter Henry and Lizzie.

Alf.—Well, Henry, have you made up with Lizzie?

Henry.—Alas, she still won't——

Alf.—O Lizzie, how obstinate!

Lizzie.—But master——

Emma.—You must give in, Lizzie; you must say the words.

Liz.—You know——

Emma.—We know everything.

Aus.—Yes, Lizzie, you began the whole trouble.

Kath.—Yes, indeed, and thereby spoiled our entire morning. As a punishment you must repeat the phrase publicly; so out with it: Thank God the table is set.

All.—(Laughing.) Well!

Kath.—Well?

Aus.—Now you've really said them, too.

Kath.—Then that ends it.

Alf.—Well, Lizzie, you're the only one remaining.

Liz.—I cannot.

Emma.—I promise to see that your wedding takes place in three weeks.

Liz.—Wedding? Ah, thank God!

All.—(Laughing.) Well!

Liz.—Well?

All.—Continue, continue.

Liz.—How?

Hen.—Now say the rest.

Liz.—Oh! that?

All.—Go on, go on.

Liz.—The table is set.

All.—Bravo, bravo.

Roderich Benedix was unquestionably one of the most popular writers of comedy during the first half of the nineteenth century, ranking next after Kotzebue, as Robertson estimates him in his *History of German Literature*, though assuredly this is no very great compliment. "His plays," says Robertson, "combine a homely provincialism with undoubted powers of characterization and command of stage effect, but they possess little or no literary interest, except, perhaps, as modern equivalents of the Saxon comedy of the eighteenth century." This is damning with somewhat feeble praise,

and hardly does justice to the author of *Der Stoerenfried* and *Bemoostes Haupt*. His dramatic works fill twenty-seven volumes, and not a few of them still hold the German stage. Yet neither he nor Kotzebue can compare for a moment with the great masters, as Schiller and Lessing, nor even with those of the second class, as Iffland and Grillparzer. Nevertheless, he was a man of far more than mediocre ability, as will be admitted by those who have taken the trouble to peruse the comedy given above.

EGOTIST AND PSEUDO-CRITIC

HERR GOTTLIEB MERKS
(DER EGOIST UND KRITIKUS)

OF

AUGUST V. KOTZEBUE.

(*Translated by W. H. H. Chambers.*)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HERR GOTTLIEB MERKS, Critic.

CORALINE, an Actress.

FOPPMAN an Author.

JULIE, a poor Girl.

KILIAN, a Copyist.

FRITZ HOLDER, an aspiring Poet.

KRAUSE, Bookseller and Publisher.

Some servants and persons that do not speak.

Egotist and Pseudo-Critic.

ARGUMENT.

Herr Gottlieb Merks, an extremely egotistical author, has led astray and then abandoned Julie, who has been succeeded in his affections by a mediocre actress named Katrina. Coraline, another and more talented actress, whom he has never seen, proposes to play a part that Katrina had hoped to play. For this reason she is severely attacked by Merks in his newspaper, as also is Foppman, a rival author and a stranger to Merks. Julie, driven to despair, attempts suicide, but is rescued by Kilian, who takes her to his home, and later, while endeavoring to induce Merks to make compensation, is driven away with insults. Foppman, Coraline, Kilian and some others who have also been insolently treated by Merks, determine to execute a plan conceived by Foppman, and designed to bring Merks into ridicule and provide for Julie at his expense. They pass off Coraline as a Persian princess who has travelled all the way from her native land to meet the distinguished author. His vanity causes him to fall readily into the trap. He becomes deeply smitten, accepts the Mohammedan faith, and goes through a pretended ceremony with no small discomfort to himself. After he has af-

forded them much merriment and handed over a valuable ring and some money, they unmask, and the play closes with their jeers and scornful laughter at his threats.

ACT I.

Scene: Herr Gottlieb Merks' room. Merks is sitting at his writing table, which is covered with books and papers. In the rear, near the door, stands a printer's devil waiting for copy.

Merks.—The last number simply glimmered and glowed, as it were, in token of the approaching storm—now comes the lightning-stroke and thunder. We'll wean, little by little, these would-be famous actresses from travelling round. And particularly this Coraline, who dares to undertake the title-rôle in which my charming Katrina alone should appear. (Strikes the table with his fist.) Yes, she shall be first, and first remain. And this I'll iterate and reiterate to the public until they stop laughing at it. Therefore, hands off, Coraline. Should she, nevertheless, dare to step upon the boards, not only shall she find the pen sharp, but the tongue as well. (To the youth.) Here, my boy, take this copy to the printer; it must be run off to-night.

Now, let's see what the mails have brought us. (He opens several letters and packages.) A romance in two volumes—not even bound—and a short, curt note. (Places the package aside.) 'Twill be damned with faint praise. (Opens another.) An Annual to the Muses—nicely bound—many fine engravings—rather expensive. (Lays it aside.) Will be strongly commended to the public. (Opens another.) Poetry—in morocco—and a ducat besides. (Puts it with the others.) Most excellent poetry! (Opens letters.) A contribution to my newspaper—anonymous—no compliments—will not be published. Also another and quite a note with it. (He reads some passages.) Honored sir—your celebrity—your genius—your learning—a modest Muse implores your protection and patronage.—Very good! Just let me see what sort of stuff the modest Muse writes.—Wretched, abominably wretched! But in considera-

tion of her confidence and trust—one mustn't stifle budding genius—it shall be published. (Opens another.) Ah! here's a contribution from a popular, yet somewhat self-conceited author. (Runs over it hastily.) I'll lay it aside, or perhaps 'twould be better to correct it a little, and put in here and there a question-mark in parenthesis, whereby both the public and he may learn that there are people who doubt his statements and revise his matter. Above all, I shall not permit anyone to imagine that he can please the public without my consent.

Enter the Publisher Krause.

Krause.—I come in very low spirits to see you.

Merks.—Who are you?

Krause.—I'm the bookseller and publisher, Krause, a man to whom it is becoming more and more difficult to properly care for his numerous children. It has pleased you to carp and cavil at my latest publication—really, a good book—to such an extent that I fear the entire, and rather large edition, will be left on my hands.

Merks.—You surely do not come here to take me to task for that? It pleased me to base my criticism upon my own opinion, and that is something no one can constrain.

Krause.—No one, indeed, but yourself; nor should I permit myself one word on this subject, had you really criticised the work in accordance with your opinion.

Merks.—Can you prove the contrary?

Krause.—To be sure. When the book first appeared you expressed to my friend, councillor Baumann, a very favorable opinion.

Merks.—Yes, at that time.

Krause.—Of a man like you, I dare not presume to think that he would express an opinion without thorough examination; nor can I imagine that he would repudiate an opinion based on such examination.

Merks.—Why not? I have, before now, praised many an author as long as he remained my friend, and lashed him when he became mine enemy.

Krause.—I wonder at the frankness of your speech.

Merks.—'Tis my manner—it impresses.

Krause.—But surely, I never was your enemy.

Merks.—Now listen, my dear Herr Krause; a word in confidence. Didn't you send a copy of your work to the editor of a certain journal?

Krause.—Yes.

Merks.—And none to me. Why none to me?

Krause.—Because my relations with him are intimate and friendly.

Merks.—And not with me. There you have it. Why should you wonder? Just look, everywhere here on this table are lying books which were sent me by the publishers, accompanied with polite letters—sometimes, indeed, laden with ready money. You will find it quite natural that such works enjoy a certain preference.

Krause.—I have always believed that the preference given was due to the book itself.

Merks.—That is at it happens. We must all live. Four times a year I send my reviewer's copies to auction. That brings quite a sum, and one hand washes the other.

Krause.—'Tis true when one does dirty work, the hands must needs be washed.

Merks.—Sir, do you venture to——

Krause.—Don't take umbrage. I clearly perceive that I am but a sorry publisher. I understand quite as little how to beg for editorial notices as how to palm off on the public favorable reviews written by myself.

Merks.—Then you are, indeed, a sorry publisher.

Krause.—I have always been of the opinion that a critic in whose reviews the public have confidence should not deceive his readers.

Merks.—My dear Herr Krause, who reads reviews with an idea of choosing their reading accordingly?

Krause.—Then why are they published?

Merks.—Simply because there are people who take delight in malicious attacks. The great horde as gladly see an author stigmatized as a criminal hung.

Krause.—Great heavens! Then whom should be most despised—the public or the critic?

Merks.—Well, take your choice. If you have nothing more to say, kindly excuse me; I have still three reviews to write this morning, and I have not as yet read a single page of the books.

Krause.—And if I should have our entire conversation printed?

Merks.—Then I should simply say that you had lied from one end to the other.

Krause.—Because no one has been near us?

Merks.—Exactly.

Krause.—(Shrugging his shoulders.) Good God! Thou permittest thy sun to shine upon such men! Truly 'tis not right. (He leaves.)

Merks.—(Alone.) An amusing business man! He would be a publisher and does not even understand how to find praise for his books. The worse they are the more they must be puffed. 'Tis an old trick of the trade, but the race of fools that permit themselves to be deceived thereby never dies out.

Reënter Krause.

Krause.—I had almost forgotten something important. This manuscript has been brought to me to be published. Some humorous lines containing a narration of a little event that happened to you some days ago.

Merks.—What event?

Krause.—Well, 'tis said that your newspaper caused you to be noticed by some military gentlemen, and that in a public place some fingers became too intimate with your nose.

Merks.—Bagatelle!

Krause.—'Tis all told here with great gusto. I don't care to have anything to do with the lines, so I'll hand them over to you.

Merks.—You do yourself an injustice; if they're really witty they may make considerable money for you.

Krause.—I'm very willing, indeed anxious, to make money; but it's not indifferent to me how I make it. (He leaves.)

Merks.—(Alone.) The fellow is a fool. Did he for one moment believe that 'twould cause a single gray hair to grow in my head if he published it? The genuine critic snaps his fingers at censure and contempt, for he wears a coat of mail like a rhinoceros.

Enter Fritz Holder.

Holder.—Have I the honor to address the learned Herr Merks?

Merks.—That's my name.

Hol.—You can see that I'm young; perhaps you can also see that I'm poor. My parents are along in years and I'm their only support. For a long time I've been seeking a small office. A little while ago I hoped to obtain a patron by an occasional poem. The man is a friend of the Muses and patronizes budding talent. My hopes would probably have reached fruition, but unfortunately my brochure fell into your hands, and it pleased you to ridicule it so severely that my hopes were all dashed to the ground.

Merks.—I had very good reasons.

Hol.—Now tell me, on your honor, was my poem so very bad?

Merks.—Not at all; in fact, there were even here and there sparks of genius.

Hol.—Then why didn't you say so?

Merks.—Because in it you paid homage to a certain clique that I despise.

Hol.—And for this reason you jestingly, in cold blood, destroyed the hopes of a poor young man?

Merks.—Pshaw! what do I know of your hopes. The critic deals with art and pays no attention to the private purpose of the artisan.

Hol.—And thus the man dares to answer me who, with easy candor, confesses that he fulfills his functions with so little consideration—who acknowledges that purely on account of party spite he has stamped upon these sparks of genius——

Merks.—My dear sir, your talk wearies me. Go; write me down; the public shall judge between us.

Hol.—He who enjoys the advantage of entertaining the public four or five times a week with his wit is sure to be adjudged right, since he has the last word. No, I shall not write you down. You do me justice in one of your earliest issues and thus right my wrong.

Merks.—I? Retract? Heaven forbid! Like Pilate, I say: What I have written I have written.

Hol.—Have the thanks and love of men no charm for you?

Merks.—I love myself, and that furnishes me sufficient employment.

Hol.—'Tis sad that heart and genius are so seldom combined.

Merks.—The heart, my young friend, is something that every clever man carries in his mouth, but never in his bosom.

Hol.—Alas!

Merks.—To master men is the aim of genius; and fear, the best tool. Him that fears me I can use quite as much as if he loved me, and what he may think of my heart matters not to me.

Hol.—Farewell.

Merks.—Yet a word. You appear to be a young man of real talent, and I can, with reason, show that I have a good heart. Write down a certain school that you have seemed to favor and I promise to change that unfavorable review of which you complain into one most favorable.

Hol.—What! After you have published the sharpest censure?

Merks.—Have you never heard that charming anecdote of the cardinal, who, after proving most clearly the existence of God, offered on the spot to prove as clearly the contrary?

Hol.—Excellent!

Merks.—Each deals, speaks and writes according to his convenience; to-day, this—to-morrow, something else. Why, then, should only the critic be unchangeable, like a fixed star?

Hol.—Pray, Herr Merks, take it not unkindly, but I must speak out. You drive a wretched trade. May my blighted happiness never burden your conscience! (He leaves.)

Merks.—(Alone.) No danger of that. But just write another book and I promise you I'll bear your words in mind. The benighted Philistine mind constantly feeds on foreign food. It cannot comprehend the genius who is sufficient unto himself, who draws his web, like the spider, from himself alone, and foreign wisdom never mixes in his mental food. His own mirror, he never misses a friend, except when some scheme requires him. Wherever I've been I've constantly chosen my own circle, of which I alone have been the centre, and each radius unites with and gets its being from me alone. Yet has my heart never been bound within this circle when otherwise it suited my purpose, nor has gratitude ever held me back; for no principle is a spring of action to the wise except he finds his benefit and happiness therein. The world may go to wreck around him, for aught he cares, if only it is permitted him to stand comfortably on his clod. I am a friend—so long as friendship proves useful and pleasing. I praise—him that admires and eulogizes me. I am also virtuous—when it wins me honor. I'll bravely protest and fight for the under dog—when I am sure to stand thereby in all the blaze of chivalry. 'Tis then the credulous world calls me the avenger of mankind. I laugh in my sleeve—a sufficient hero unto myself.

Enter Kilian.

Kilian.—Highly honored sir, if you will kindly permit me to mention the matter, I have the honor to be, so to speak, a colleague of yours.

Merks.—Indeed? and your name is?

Kil.—The writer Kilian. In truth, only a copyist, but nevertheless, in a sense, an author.

Merks.—(Sarcastically.) To be sure!

Kil.—In the course of my life I have written many a thousand sheets of foolscap for the lawyers, and I am accustomed to say that while my writings do not, I admit, reach the book stores, neither do they come to an ignominious end, but are carefully preserved in archives.

Merks.—Well, what can I do for you, my worthy colleague?

Kil.—Show that you have the heart of a Christian.

Merks.—Many thanks for the confidence you repose in me.

Kil.—No, I cannot say that I have any confidence in you, but I rely upon God's word: Seek and ye shall find.

Merks.—Without further exordium may I ask——?

Kil.—The petition cannot be granted, since I have a quasi-exordium, or statement of facts *in petto.*

Merks.—I beg you to be brief at least.

Kil.—As brief as I can. At seven o'clock in the evening, on the twenty-first of November, after sitting in a cramped position at my writing table for ten hours, I came down my five flights of stairs to the street in order to——

Merks.—(Impatiently.) Get a little fresh air.

Kil.—No; fresh air, thank God! is never lacking in my room, since I am well supplied by both the north and west wind, and each storm is accustomed to speak first to me. No, I came down simply to stretch my legs, for I am becoming old and stiff and my legs had occupied for some hours an extremely limited space.

Merks.—Go on, go on.

Kil.—The moon was shining with a rather faint light as I walked comfortably along the canal—for I live in Lumpen street near the canal—when I met——

Merks.—The policeman, I suppose.

Kil.—No, not the policeman; his appearance at this place belongs to a later period. I met a young woman with a baby in her arms, and as she passed me I thought I heard her sigh and sob several times.

Merks.—Ah! the romance now begins to be interesting.

Kil.—No romance, learned sir; it really happened. Curiosity is no failing of mine; besides, I've no time for it, yet I know not what whispered to me: Watch the woman.

Merks.—Well, you watched her?

Kil.—I stepped back into the shadow of a lamp-post, for in Lumpen street the lamps are seldom lighted and I saw the young woman go to that part of the canal where the washerwomen usually go. She kept walking backward and forward along the canal, and I could now distinctly hear her sigh.

What does she mean to do, I wondered. It isn't possible that she means to—and even as I stood watching her, she, with the child in her arms, jumped into the water.

Merks.—Ah!

Kil.—I ran to the rescue, and without thinking that the art of swimming is not one of my accomplishments, sprang into the canal, which, thank God! only reached my armpits. God's mercy enabled me to bring both mother and child safely to shore; and, apart from a dangerous fever which laid me on my back for six weeks, I felt no evil effects from my bath.

Merks.—But the woman?

Kil.—The fever did not come on until the next day, so I had time to take the young woman to my home, and through Christian exhortation to bring her to repent her evil deed.

Merks.—And for what reason——

Kil.—She unbosomed herself to me. She is the daughter of an honest, middle-class citizen and was led astray by an eminent but unscrupulous man and then left to starve. With that poor little helpless creature in her arms, she sought service, but in vain. She saw her child pining away and in utter despair jumped into the canal. I have now told you the story in a few words.

Merks.—Well, what have I got to do with it?

Kil.—Like the Prophet Nathan, I can only say: Thou art the man.

Merks.—Indeed; now I perceive what you're driving at. Is the young woman still gadding about?

Kil.—She is not gadding about, as you phrase it, but lives beneath my roof and shares what God provides us.

Merks.—Well, you ought to marry her.

Kil.—That I should do by all means were I not already married and the happy, but poor, father of five children; on this account, though against my will I asked her, but once only, if she knew of no other place of refuge. Only with God, she answered, for the man whose duty it is to marry and care for me, shamefully thrust me from his door.

Merks.—(Angrily.) I have given her much more now than she deserves.

Kil.—After that answer I said no more, but managed by copying four more sheets daily to furnish what she required. I have nothing but praise for her industry, her grateful spirit and her modesty toward men. These good qualities have become so well known that a mechanic now seeks her hand in marriage and the only hindrance is the lack of a few hundred thalers to furnish the new home. Go, my daughter, said I, to Herr Merks; he will furnish the means.

Merks.—Indeed!

Kil.—Then she said: No, he won't.

Merks.—She was right.

Kil.—Then said I: Go and try. But she replied: I'd rather die. Then I said: Well, I'll go myself, and so in God's name, here I am.

Merks.—I'm very sorry; you might, during this time, have copied another sheet.

Kil.—Yes, two, at least.

Merks.—And you've troubled yourself entirely in vain.

Kil.—God will not permit——

Merks.—I know that the law permits.

Kil.—Oh, I know that also.

Merks.—And I've seen more——

Kil.—That may be before the *judex ordinarius*. But there is besides a *judex* here in our breast——

Merks.—My friend, or rather colleague, kindly permit me to remark that each knows best what he should or should not do.

Kil.—He should know, indeed, but does not always.

Merks.—Well, short and good, I'll give nothing.

Kil.—But that's short and bad.

Merks.—No more of your sorry jokes, or I'll throw you down stairs.

Kil.—Don't trouble yourself; I'll leave at once and gladly shake your dust from off my shoes.

Merks.—A very good thing to do.

Kil.—And I'll say to the young woman: There is yet a third

judex up yonder, and when Herr Merks is cited to appear before him, he must put in an appearance whether he will or no, and in spite of all his protests; 'till then, God be with you. (He leaves.)

Merks.—(Alone.) Old gossip! that which no longer remains in direct relation with me or no longer procures me any enjoyment in life is, and shall remain, indifferent. Who knocks? Come in.

Enter Foppman (in a Persian costume).

Foppman.—The stars should bow and pay homage to the most celebrated of all Germans.

Merks.—Who are you, sir? Are you masquerading?

Fopp.—In nowise. I am, indeed, a German, and proud of it, because you, *mein Herr*, are German. Nevertheless, I wear this foreign costume because it is my right. I studied medicine, and some years ago, while with a certain emissary *per varios casus*, found myself cast adrift in Persia. There I had the luck to become household physician to the prince of Erzeroum and at the same time was intrusted with teaching the German language to his daughter, the princess, a beautiful, intelligent and interesting girl. She found the study to her taste, and no expense was spared in gathering together and importing into Persia twenty camel loads of the best German literature, that she read or had read to her. Her tender, sensitive feelings were sometimes wrought to so high a pitch that she was forced through pure delight and rapture to close her eyes. She enjoyed all, praised many but treasured only one. Her favorite author was and is Herr Gottlieb Merks.

Merks.—(Highly pleased.) Truly, quite an honor.

Fopp.—Just as Alexander the Great ever carried about with him in a costly casket the works of Aristotle, so does the princess of Erzeroum ever carry yours in a cedar casket adorned with pearls.

Merks.—That's very flattering.

Fopp.—Oft have I heard her say, with a sigh: Why does not fate permit me to see the great man? The charming princess little dreamed that the fulfillment of her heart's desire lay so near.

Merks.—How so?

Fopp.—Since my most gracious patron is pleased to listen, I'll continue. The prince, her father, became dangerously ill. At the time I had just learned that in Germany the temple of Æsculapius had become a Bacchus-temple, since the most dangerous diseases were treated simply with the juice of the grape. I immediately began to administer to my distinguished patient several gallons of Schiras wine daily, whereupon, at the end of a week, he sank into a gentle and eternal sleep. The Princess Zoraide, a near relative of the mighty Sophi of Persia, inherited her father's domain, and as she henceforth could do as she pleased, she was unable to withstand the temptation of a trip to Germany in order to come face to face with the author whose works she had so long treasured.

Merks.—What! the Princess Zoraide of Erzeroum is really in Germany?

Fopp.—She has just arrived.

Merks.—On my account?

Fopp.—She longs to see no other person or thing. I wished to show her the menagerie in Schoenbrunn. I even offered to show her the devil at whom Martin Luther threw the ink-well, but she refused them all. Herr Gottlieb Merks is the only object of her heart's desire.

Merks.—I am overwhelmed with honor. And do you act as her interpreter?

Fopp.—Merely the interpreter of her sentiments, for the German tongue has been so thoroughly mastered by her royal highness that you could scarce detect the Persian accent.

Merks.—So much the better. I will pay her a ceremonious call.

Fopp.—A fitting invitation is the aim of my visit. At the same time the princess delegated to me the honor of handing you, as the custom obtains in Persia, this gift. (Presents him an agraffe richly set with stones.)

Merks.—(Highly surprised.) I cannot hope to—such a costly gift——

Fopp.—It is merely, if I am not mistaken, a forerunner of

many greater marks of favor on the part of her royal highness. I know so well the charming Zoraide—a trifle too enthusiastic, her veins full of hot Oriental blood—that I should not be surprised in the least to see you, my patron, before long decorated with the order of the Sun, and indeed honor you as my master.

Merks.—As a matter of fact, doctor, if modesty were not a virtue that I am inclined to overdo, I really fear you might turn my head. The princess is beautiful, you say?

Fopp.—Very beautiful.

Merks.—And these diamonds testify that she is rich.

Fopp.—As a sovereign princess.

Merks.—I hasten to prostrate myself at her feet. Where is she?

Fopp.—We are stopping at the Blue Fox.

Merks.—Kindly assure the charming Princess Zoraide that I am devoured by desire to kiss the hem of her robe.

Fopp.—This embassy will win for me some handsome presents. (He makes several deep bows and leaves.)

Merks.—(Alone.) What great, fine things may happen to the man who knows how to use his head and pen! This agraffe appears to be of priceless worth—to-morrow I'll have a jeweler appraise it. Now, however, I shall not deny the ardent desire of the princess. (He steps before a mirror.) What will she say of my figure?—a trifle undersized and rather too thick, but powerful, rich in muscle. And the features?—the flashing eyes—the shrewd glance—the satirical mouth—the well-rounded cheeks—so doubtless, I have appeared in her sweet dreams. Ought I to dress more carefully?—yet, no; why should I?

An early negligence becomes a genius. With cool and easy grace he comes upon the scene and curtly bows. Then he looks boldly round, and with lofty self-confidence, mixed with a dash of pride, shows that he appreciates only inner worth. Unbidden, he chooses an easy chair, and stretching himself out comfortably, strikes his chin. He listens to the chatter upon this and that—books, music, theatres, and when he opens his mouth his words are oracles. He thunders forth words of criticism and scornfully laughs down his contradictors.

Filled with wonder, the chorus loudly praise him, for his pen is feared and they tremble at his tongue. Therefore, tinsel finery is superfluous to a genius whose celebrity precedes him and whose adornment is fame.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A room in the Blue Fox Inn. Enter Coraline and Foppman.

Coraline.—Well, my dear Foppman, what may we hope?

Foppman.—The triumph of our vengeance.

Coral.—Really? Then he was as credulous as Molière's *Monsieur Jourdain?* He bids fair to become a second *Mamamouchi?*

Fopp.—Yes, upon my word, charming Coraline.

Coral.—Such a clever, crafty and witty man?

Fopp.—The vanity of an author, and especially of a criticaster such as he, resembles the sweet intoxication of that beggar who imagined that he was sultan. The most absurd scheme is taken for gospel truth by this kind of man, provided his own well-loved person is given a distinguished part therein. The silly conceit and foolish fancies he so despises and ridicules in others find warm and ready acceptance in his own swelled head. One may write the grossest flatteries, or indeed say them to his face, and on the ground that they are his, due for distinguished service, he will justify and receive them with enthusiasm. For flattery alone he has a Lebanon-cedar measuring rod that reaches to the clouds. He doubts everything except his genius, and 'twould not be a difficult task to persuade him that both leaning towers in Bologna bend simply to pay him homage.

Coral.—He believes the rhinestones in his agraffe to be genuine diamonds?

Fopp.—As genuine as his fame.

Coral.—And doesn't doubt for an instant that a Persian princess is lodging at the Blue Fox solely on his account?

Fopp.—He is to appear immediately that he may kiss the hem of Zoraide's robe.

Coral.—Splendid! But did you succeed in learning why he attacks tooth and nail in his newspaper, an actress whom he has never seen, who has never given him the least cause for offense, and this, too, before she has as yet appeared here upon the boards?

Fopp.—It happens very naturally. Herr Gottlieb Merks is smitten with a young but very mediocre actress, who, without the slightest suspicion on his part, is playing him for a fool. He never tires of praising her to the public, but because no one sees, or indeed, can see her in the light he does, and because his unbounded eulogies incites the public to laughter only, he pours out his venom at frequent intervals upon the heads of the unthankful public and every one that stands in his heroine's pathway. He surmises that you, my charming Coraline, will throw that mediocre creature entirely in the shade; consequently he desires to forestall that event, and this accounts for his insolent rudeness.

Coral.—But why did he so constantly and severely attack your last work, which was so well received by the public?

Fopp.—That happened very naturally also. We are not personally acquainted, although we have corresponded with each other for a long time. As long as he found me useful, and I was numbered among his admirers, so long had he words of praise only for me. But now I have met with two misfortunes: first, I dared to differ with him; and, second, I dared to please the public without his express permission. A species of lofty scorn glows in his breast and drives the venom to his finger-tips, from whence it streams into his pen. Nor is it hindered by the fact that I have shown him friendship and done him good service. 'Tis enough to cause an egotist to hate me.

Coral.—Shame upon such an odious man!

Fopp.—For heaven's sake! don't do him the honor to take him seriously. Such sinners are best punished by ridicule and laughter.

Coral.—You're right. Is everything ready?

Fopp.—Yes, everything. I have succeeded in interesting some others, whom he has maliciously insulted, in our scheme, and they will help to play our burlesque. I have borrowed

from the property-room all that we require, and each rôle will be played *con amore*. I even succeeded in persuading the brave and honest Kilian to take a part in our mummery; the maiden, however, was so little disposed to the scheme that we almost had to drag her here, and your eloquence is now required to remove her remaining scruples.

Coral.—Where is she?

Fopp.—In the anteroom, where she awaits your call.

Coral.—Oh, quick, call her. Her adventures make her interesting.

Fopp.—You persuade her while I stand guard, that we may not be surprised by our principal personage. I have posted the porter and other people about the place and a number of our Persians are now ready. They will almost die a-laughing when they see each other. (He opens the door.) Come right in, miss. (He leaves.)

Enter Julie.

Coral.—(Aside.) What a beautiful girl. (Aloud.) Come nearer, my dear. Don't be bashful. We have both been badly used by a good-for-nothing fellow, and to-day we'll join hands to revenge ourselves.

Julie.—Ah, madam, that is not Christian.

Coral.—No, but it's human.

Julie.—Heaven, without our aid, will justly punish.

Coral.—But suppose we are the chosen instruments?

Julie.—Oh, no!

Coral.—Yours is an easy part.

Julie.—I cannot make-believe.

Coral.—You won't have to speak.

Julie.—He'll recognize me at once.

Coral.—Persian ladies are always veiled.

Julie.—Please do without me.

Coral.—My dear child, our well-planned scheme can only half succeed if you do not take a part.

Julie.—I have forgiven, and wish him no harm.

Coral.—Really, we only expect to laugh at him and see that a measure of justice is done you.

Julie.—I cannot laugh at him, nor do I seek for human justice.

Coral.—My child, such magnanimity is praiseworthy as regards yourself, but have you no duty toward another being?

Julie.—Alas!

Coral.—What, if by doing as I wish, you may assure food and shelter to a helpless creature?

Julie.—You touch a tender cord.

Coral.—And if you could secure by this trifling sacrifice that honest man who wishes to reconcile you with your fate?

Julie.—Ah! if I could do that——

Coral.—Trust me for it.

Julie.—But I'll spoil everything.

Coral.—Oh, no you won't. All I ask of you is to be present. You needn't say a word.

Julie.—Well, then I consent.

Coral.—You'll not regret it.

Fopp.—(Showing his head in the door.) He's coming.

Coral.—Come quickly into my bedroom. Happily, we're both about the same size.

SCENE II.

A room in the Blue Fox Inn. Holder and Krause, in Persian costumes, are each holding one of Merks' arms and leading him with slow, measured steps, to the middle of the stage, where they leave him; each then goes to a corner of the foreground, where they turn toward him, place their arms at their sides, and stare fixedly at him.

Merks.—(Aside.) I'm quite unfamiliar with these Persian customs. (To Krause.) May I have the honor to pay my respects to her royal highness, the Princess of Erzeroum?

Krause.—(Extends both his arms, strikes his hands together, bows deeply, raises first one foot and then the other to the tip of Merks' nose, and leaves.)

Merks.—What a curious custom! (To Holder.) My friend,

I desire to pay my humble respects to her royal highness the Princess Zoraide.

Holder.—(Repeats Krause's performance and leaves.)

Merks.—They leave me alone. What does that mean?

Enter Foppman.

Foppman.—Pray pardon me, my patron, for not being on hand when you came. Our retinue is not familiar with the German tongue, and you, possibly, on the other hand, are not very conversant with Persian.

Merks.—I, of course, read and write nearly all tongues, but lack practice in speaking.

Fopp.—You will easily acquire fluency if you will only determine to visit our beautiful Persia.

Merks.—Why not, if advantage, honor and pleasure are all to be obtained thereby?

Fopp.—A stream of golden sands, a forest of laurel wreaths and a sea of bliss.

Merks.—You make use, I perceive, of the Oriental style.

Fopp.—I promise none too much. I know what I know. Strictly *sub rosa:* When I arrived here after visiting you, I found her royal highness, the Princess of Erzeroum, in a state bordering on frenzy due entirely to her curiosity regarding you. Not only must I repeat each and every word that fell from your learned lips, but must also make full and accurate report of your honor's well-known figure and graceful, calm manner.

Merks.—Who knows what a deceptive image she may have formed of me?

Fopp.—To be sure; since she believed herself to be honoring an old man in the learned Gottlieb Merks. And as she little dreamed to find such wisdom and well-earned fame in a young man, how astonished she was to learn that the object of her admiration was still in the heyday of youth!

Merks.—Oh! not the heyday; I'm rushing on toward forty.

Fopp.—Is it possible? One might judge that from your writings, but never from your face and figure.

Merks.—And what did the Princess say?

Fopp.—Well, she said—nothing; she sighed—cast down her eyes—threw herself upon a couch—glanced at me with a blush—and then suddenly drew her veil to hide her confusion.

Merks.—(Highly pleased.) It appears that Persian ladies make use of the same language as Europeans.

Fopp.—After a while she said: Alas! doctor, I fear I was very foolish to leave my native land.

Merks.—(Laughing.) Why so?

Fopp.—This I also asked, with deep respect. Can you ask such a question? she replied. The reefs of the Caspian sea are less dangerous than your charming description.

Merks.—(Good-naturedly, shaking his finger at him.) Who bade you be false to truth?

Fopp.—Truth alone guided my pencil.

Merks.—You might have spared her modesty and mine. Yet hasten to introduce me to the Princess, that the flattering error may not become too deeply rooted.

Fopp.—You will not object to submit yourself to Oriental custom?

Merks.—Which?

Fopp.—To bend the knee when her royal highness appears.

Merks.—You said, did you not, that the Princess is beautiful?

Fopp.—Wondrously beautiful.

Merks.—Well, who would not gladly bend his knee to such a beautiful lady?

Fopp.—There she is.

Enter Coraline, heavily veiled, in a rich Persian costume.

Merks.—(On his knees.) The happy mortal that your royal highness has condescended to receive, lies at your feet.

Coraline.—Arise. I speak German bad, else should I give you some charming compliments.

Merks.—(Aside.) Already the dulcet tones of that voice make my breast thrill with rapture!

Coral.—You are a great man—greater than our poet Saadi.

Merks.—It were easy to surpass him, were I permitted to sing your charms.

Coral.—I not beautiful—ah! would that I were it.

Merks.—Why is this envious veil allowed to hide these heavenly features?

Coral.—You not flatter must. I want speak of Germany—of poetry—I want to learn—big voyage I make to see you—you know everything—you say everything fine.

Merks.—Whatever I may know, I run a great risk at this moment to entirely forget.

Coral.—I love German—love romance—you me tell which beautiful.

Merks.—That is very difficult; they are few and far between. Apart from my own, I know of none that combines fiery fantasy with clever plot and dazzling wit with flowery speech.

Coral.—But plays?

Merks.—Good for nothing, all of them. Personally, I write none. Yet I hope by caustic criticism to raise, little by little, this branch of art.

Coral.—But poetry?

Merks.—Leaves much to be desired. Mine may well be the best, at all events. My verses are at least light, smoothly flowing and elevated.

Coral.—But history?

Merks.—In that branch the Germans are utter failures—with the single exception of some attempts of mine that I have published as a sample, but which until the present time have been unattained by others.

Coral.—But philosophy?

Merks.—Makes much noise in our midst—yet true philosophy modestly conceals itself in my writings.

Coral.—But criticism?

Merks.—Ah! in that branch I flatter myself to have produced some superior work.—Yet I must deplore that I alone am distinguished in this art.

Coral.—See you, doctor? I well said: He alone in Germany, great man.

Fopp.—I never dared to contradict it.

Coral.—I so moved—so pleased. I know not how to express myself. You take this ring.

Fopp.—Most gracious princess, the costliest stone in your father's treasure!

Coral.—You keep peace. Not enough costly for Gottlieb Merks.

Merks.—Your royal highness, I am struck dumb. (Aside.) What a magnificent solitaire!

Coral.—Each line of your writing is more worth.

Merks.—Ah! this ring is certainly very precious, yet, if I may dare to beg a favor that has still greater value in my eyes——

Coral.—Dare, dare.

Merks.—If I may be permitted to raise that hateful veil which deprives me from viewing the beauty of a goddess.

Coral.—You ask too much. In Persia I cannot dare to unveil before a brother.

Merks.—We are in Germany, most gracious princess.

Coral.—But the Prophet——

Merks.—The Prophet shall not learn a word about it.

Coral.—I can you nothing deny. (She unveils herself and looks at him languishingly.)

Merks.—Ha! what do I see! Has Venus arisen? Is Hebe reincarnated. (Aside.) By heavens! more beautiful than my Katrina!

Coral.—One shouldn't trust words of poets.

Merks.—Not words, but feelings, since the bewitched poet stands speechless before such beauty.

Coral.—Oh, Merks!

Merks.—Since his eyes glow; his lips tremble.

Coral.—Oh, Gottlieb Merks!

Merks.—Since even respect itself cannot prevent him from throwing himself at the feet of the goddess. (He does so.)

Coral.—Oh, learned sir!

Merks.—I acknowledge my subjugation; my freedom is gone forever.

Coral.—You would carry my chains?

Merks.—Until death.

Coral.—What becomes of me!—I forget my dominion, Erzeroum, and also the mighty Sophi of Persia, my cousin.

Merks.—Love forgets everything.

Coral.—Love!—Gottlieb Merks!

Merks.—It changes gods into swans and princesses into shepherd's lasses.

Coral.—My head swims—my princely blood boils—I totter—I fall. (She sinks into his arms.)

Merks.—Into my arms!

Coral.—(Tears herself loose.) Oh, what have I done!—am I crazy? Great Prophet! how can I save me from this dangerous man? Doctor, follow me, give me pills—I'm very sick. (She leaves.)

Fopp.—(Following her.) Pray remain, 'tis nothing serious.

Merks.—(Alone.) I know without his assurance that 'tis nothing serious. Such fainting fits are cured neither by pills nor prophets—a rapid triumph, as usual.—I must follow it up. —Her princely pride must wrestle in my arms and be laid low by passion.—Yet, still more audacious hopes beckon—Entire Persia looms up large upon the horizon.

Enter Foppman.

Fopp.—Alas! what have you done, my worthy Herr Merks?

Merks.—Oh, such things happen to me occasionally.

Fopp.—She's bathed in tears.

Merks.—I'll dry them.

Fopp.—She is in despair.

Merks.—Entirely superfluous.

Fopp.—She swears she cannot live without you.

Merks.—Then she shall live with me.

Fopp.—Thoughtlessly, she cries: I shall share my throne with him.

Merks.—That may be.

Fopp.—But alas!

Merks.—Well, why this alas?

Fopp.—Alas! alas!

Merks.—Is she somewhat afraid of the Sophi of Persia?

Fopp.—Not that. He is an old man, in his second childhood; she can do with him what she will.

Merks.—So much the better.

Fopp.—But alas!

Merks.—Is she in any way engaged to some prince?

Fopp.—Not that. She has shown, until now, an insurmountable aversion to love and marriage.

Merks.—So much the better.

Fopp.—But alas!

Merks.—Oh, the devil! What do you mean by this perpetual alas?

Fopp.—Her royal highness Princess Zoraide is a pious lady who zealously submits to the teaching of the Prophet, and you, my most worthy Herr Merks, are alas! an infidel dog.

Merks.—Oh, if it's nothing more than that we'll get around it easily.

Fopp.—What! you can make up your mind to——

Merks.—Why not?

Fopp.—Wear the turban?

Merks.—Why not?

Fopp.—(Impetuously embracing him.) You great man! Now I catch a glimpse of the magnificent depths of your unprejudiced mind.—Well, I'll no longer conceal that the passionately enamored princess, accustomed to having her royal desires fulfilled at once, delegated to me the delicate task of sounding you on this point. For she cried out in agony: I would rather die than marry a Christian.

Merks.—She shall not die. Kindly tell her that I am quite willing to believe anything she desires.

Coral.—(In another room.) Ha! ha! ha!

Merks.—What was that?

Fopp.—She overheard us, and is laughing hysterically from pure delight.

Merks.—May I go to her?

Fopp.—Not yet, my lord. She has sworn by Ali's grave to see her lover a Mussulman or never to see him again.

Merks.—Well, I'm already a Mussulman.

Fopp.—First a trifling ceremony is necessary.

Merks.—Can't we skip it?

Fopp.—(Shrugging his shoulders.) No. We have in our retinue an old orthodox priest who is also father confessor to her royal highness. He'll attend to it.

Merks.—Can you assure me that I'll get through all right?

Fopp.—I'll give you the benefit of all my skill.

Merks.—Well, a throne is worth the sacrifice.

Fopp.—The ceremony is, in truth, somewhat vexatious.

Merks.—Kings and kaisers must also often endure them. But hasten, for I am burning with desire to make the princess happy.

Fopp.—A moment's patience. (He leaves.)

Merks.—(Alone.) Bonneval was a celebrated man that donned the turban to become pasha of simply a couple of horse-tails. This is a matter of princely domain. I should be indeed a fool if I were to hesitate a second. The Sophi of Persia will be my uncle, and who knows what may happen if we can put his sons out of the way?

Enter Kilian disguised as a Persian priest. Behind him enter Fritz Holder, Krause, two servants and Foppman. Holder carries a silver bowl containing water, Krause an aspergill, one of the servants an oil flagon, the other a censer, and Foppman a bright wand. Kilian places himself in front of Merks, the others on either side.

Kilian.—Moxa biribi moxa.

All.—(Deeply bowing.) Mulle, mulle, mulle.

Kil.—(Taking the censer.) Serdiwalla umidelda fernambuki. (He holds the censer under Merks' nose.)

Fopp.—Now he exorcises the evil spirits.

Kil.—Ali! Ali! port o port.

All.—Mulle, mulle, mulle.

Kil.—(Takes the wand and gives the neophite three hard blows across the shoulders.) Minx—pinx—tatta minx.

Fopp.—Now he drives out the devil.

Merks.—(Shaking his shoulders.) That is a fatal exorcism.

Kil.—Mari foni ultra feri.

All.—Mulle, mulle, mulle.

Kil.—(Takes the aspergill, dips it in the water, and liberally sprinkles Merks' face.) Minkel—pinkel—tatta pinkel.

Fopp.—That's the essence of consecration.

Merks.—(Sputtering.) Well, it don't taste good.

Fopp.—It's principally salt water.

Kil.—Ali! Ali! plasma murre.

All.—(Jumping up and down.) Pie—pie—p——

Kil.—(Takes the oil flagon, dips his finger in it, and makes some black marks on Merks' face.) Torr—pax—plum—silex.

Fopp.—Now he has anointed you.

Merks.—Will he soon have finished?

Fopp.—Immediately.

Kil.—(Rocking first on one foot and then on the other, he sings:) Lidum ladum pimpi schnursi.

All.—(Doing the same.) Moxa moxa biribi.

(The servants take Merks by the arms. Kilian waddles ahead, the others follow in procession.)

Kil.—(Walking.) Lidum ladum pimpi schnursi.

All.—Moxa moxa biribi. (The procession leaves.)

SCENE III.

In the adjoining room. Coraline and Julie, awaiting their turns in the sham ceremony.

Coraline.—(Calling Foppman.) For heaven's sake, my dear Foppman, I beg you don't carry the joke too far.

Enter Foppman.

Foppman.—Just a trifle more, and our revenge will be complete.

Coral.—I'm already satisfied.

Fopp.—No pardon. (He leaves.)

Coral.—Well, my dear child, you are trembling; yes, really trembling as though it were a tragedy we are playing.

Julie.—I told you before that I am not fit to take part.

Coral.—And is it very painful to you?

Julie.—Rather.

Coral.—Oh, how chicken-hearted! My dear child, all men are monsters; but beyond all others, those cursed egotists who can see, can love and can worship no one but themselves in all the wide, wide world. To them nothing is holy save their ego; they are ever ready to sacrifice innocence to their sensuality and a good name to their vanity. They insolently jeer at all real merit, but like harpies surround the talented only to besmut them. Beware of such demons in human form; their enmity may cause you many bitter hours, but their friendship is much more dangerous, for they will sacrifice you at the lightest call of self-interest or vanity. They stand like the ill-famed upas-tree, and poison all in their vicinity.

Julie.—I hear some one coming.

Coral.—Draw your veil quickly. (They both leave.)

SCENE IV.

Another room in the Blue Fox Inn. The procession enters as formed in Scene II, with Herr Gottlieb Merks in the centre. His face bears a most painful expression. Krause carries a turban, Holder a caftan, one servant a sabre, and the other a long tobacco pipe; Foppman comes last. Kilian, at the head, murmurs prayers from the Koran.

Merks.—I must acknowledge, my dear doctor, that this ceremony has injured me somewhat.

Foppman.—A mere trifle! Whatever your dignity may have suffered during this ceremony, your future fame will more than atone for.

Kilian.—Ali merlino cedrino bambino.

Holder.—(Puts the caftan on Merks, bowing low.) Pintschura salmasi kalock.

Merks.—Your humble servant.

Kil.—Ali doldschetto marketto barretto.

Krause.—(Puts the turban on Merks' head.) Melfonte zamora krutshuk.

Merks.—Many thanks.

Kil.—Ali perlundi schnuppendi korlandi.

A Servant.—(Buckles the sword on Merks.) Illos panna fumli fli.

Merks.—Thanks again.

Kil.—Ali maldosso paffosso schnurrlosso.

The Other Servant.—(Presents Merks with a pipe.) Puffa piffa.

Merks.—Kindly receive my thanks—is it done at last?

Fopp.—All but the congratulations.

Merks.—I'll dispense with them.

Fopp.—Ah! but you don't know our old priest. He'll not spare you one iota.

Kil.—(Raises both hands and sings as he waddles around Merks.) Mili bona tango menas—schnurr schnurrwickli buck.

(As Merks is leaning forward receiving Kilian's congratulations, Krause, backing up to him, gives him a violent push, and sends him flying across the room. When Merks recovers himself he finds Krause gravely bowing to him, and as he returns the bow, Krause's performance is repeated by Holder and afterward by the others, including Kilian. Foppman, who comes last, instead of bowing, throws his arms about Merks.)

Fopp.—Now, my dear sir, all is happily ended.

Merks.—I almost lost patience.

Fopp.—The gates of Paradise open.

Enter Julie dressed in Coraline's clothes, and Coraline dressed as a Persian maid. Both are heavily veiled. Julie leans on Coraline.

Merks.—Most gracious princess, may the great Prophet ordain that I, in this new costume, find favor in your eyes.

Julie.—Ah!

Kil.—Sarabanda mallorma parsi brumalla.

Fopp.—He is granting the princess permission to become betrothed to you.

Kil.—Agga peksda wizzi raip.

Fopp.—But first the dowry and morning-gift must be exchanged between you.

Merks.—The dowry?

Fopp.—Yes; you see the gentlemen of the bedchamber are getting the dowry ready in yonder anteroom, and you will return richly laden, I warrant. (The servants go into the anteroom.)

Merks.—But the morning-gift?

Fopp.—That is expected from the bridegroom.

Merks.—(Low.) My friend, I am ashamed to acknowledge it, yet I have nothing to offer save my heart, my head and my fame.

Fopp.—More than enough. Still, out of respect to our retinue, all of whom are genuine old-school Persians, I sincerely trust that you will submit to this last formality.

Merks.—I would most gladly, but——

Fopp.—Have you nothing about you? No gold, or trifle of value?

Merks.—This ring which I received for a dedication and some forty or fifty ducats in this purse is all that I have with me.

Fopp.—'Tis sufficient. It's only a question of a trifling formality in remembrance of a Persian custom.

(While the servants are bringing in a large casket covered with a rug, Foppman offers the ring and purse to Julie. She refuses to accept them.)

Merks.—Alas! doctor, the princess scorns my humble morning-gift.

Fopp.—Oh, no! not that; but I have made an error. They should be placed in the hands of the priest, who will make a proper use of them at the right time. (He hands both to Kilian.)

Merks.—Are all difficulties now overcome? May I at last boldly raise this veil?

Fopp.—You may.

(As Merks approaches Julie her veil is thrown back by Coraline.)

Merks.—What is this?

Julie.—Do you no longer know me?

Merks.—What does this mean?

Coral.—(Throws back her veil and makes a deep bow.) I am the actress Coraline. Whenever in the future you may desire to severely attack me, you can at least assure your readers that you have seen a specimen of my art.

Merks.—(Looking angrily around.) I hope it is not——

Fopp.—(Takes off his turban with a deep bow.) I am the author Foppman. In your reviews you denied that I had any power of invention; at least this invention is mine.

Merks.—And you have dared to——

Kil.—(Taking off his beard.) I am the writer Kilian, Herr colleague.

Holder.—(Pulling off his turban.) I, Fritz Holder.

Krause.—(Doing the same.) And I, the publisher Krause.

Coral.—This Persian is my servant Hans.

Fopp.—And this one, my Christopher.

Merks.—You have been playing a comedy at my expense?

Fopp.—Only a burlesque.

Merks.—Where is my gold? my ring?

Kil.—The young woman retains both justly.

Merks.—Oh, I have the agraffe and the solitaire.

Coral.—Only rhinestones.

Merks.—I'll call the police.

Fopp.—They cannot restore what you've lost.

Merks.—(Tearing off his turban.) I'll prosecute you.

Coral.—We'll have all the laugh on our side.

Merks.—(Throwing away the pipe.) I'll get my revenge.

All.—Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Merks.—(Pulling at the sword.) What prevents me on the spot from——

(He sees that instead of a blade the sword handle has the tail of a fox affixed.)

All.—Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Fopp.—The sword from the Danube-nymph.

Merks.—(Angrily throwing it away.) You shall pay dearly for this.

All.—Mulle, mulle, mulle.

Merks.—(Pulling off the caftan.) I'll annihilate you in every issue of my newspaper.

All.—Mulle, mulle, mulle.

Merks.—(To Coraline.) You shall be hissed off the stage.

All.—Mulle, mulle, mulle.

Merks.—(To Foppman.) And you stoned.

All.—(Jumping up and down.) Pie—p.

Merks.—Tremble! tremble! in dread of my dire vengeance. (Goes off in a rage.)

Kil.—(Singing.) Lidum ladum pimpi schnursi.

All.—(Singing.) Moxa moxa biribi.

Notwithstanding its lively dialogue and amusing situations, it will be noticed that the *Egotist*, like other of Kotzebue's plays, is somewhat tenuous in structure. But this was to be expected from a man who inflicted on the world forty-four volumes of dramas, to say nothing of his history of the German empire, his work on the ancient history of Prussia, his *Reminiscences of Paris*, his *Reminiscences of Rome and Naples*, and his countless newspaper and magazine articles. Moreover, Kotzebue held office under the German or Russian governments during the best years of his life, and could give only his leisure time to literary work. Consid-

ering that he wrote so much, he could not be expected to produce what would endure. If he had given us about one-tenth in specific gravity of his enormous output, he would doubtless have made his writings ten times as interesting. Nevertheless, he does not deserve the sweeping denunciation that Carlyle pronounced on him, and holds at least a respectable place in the drama of the Fatherland. Of late his best plays have come into favor, after their temporary oblivion, and among them is the *Egotist*.